



Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 12, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

West Thunder Community Centre

Pages

1. Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting 03-2026

Chair: Samantha Zrobin

2. Members

Lyric Allin, Caregiver to a Person with a Disability

Mayor Ken Boshcoff, Council Representative

John Gobeil, Developmental Disability Representative

Todd Kennedy, Service Agency Representative

Tara Lennox, Learning Disability Representative

Ulysses Patola, Citizen Representative

Robert Tinsley, Citizen Representative

George Saarinen, Hard of Hearing/Late Deafened Representative

Tessa Soderberg, Citizen Representative

John (Rob) Wheeler, Mobility Disability Representative

Samantha Zrobin, Brain Injury Representative

Vacant, Speech Impairment Representative

Vacant, Parent to a Child with a Disability

Vacant, Visually Impaired or Blind Representative

Vacant, Caregiver to a Person with a Disability

Vacant, Senior with a Disability Representative

Vacant, Mental Health and Addiction Representative

3. Officials

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk

Wendy Handy, Coordinator - Boards, Committees & Special Projects

4. Guests

Danielle Slongo, Climate Action Specialist

Jessy Bogacki, Program Supervisor - Adult Fitness, Wellness & Inclusion Services

5. Welcome and Introductions

Meeting called to order and a roundtable of introductions to follow.

6. Communication Process

7. Disclosures

8. Agenda Approval

WITH respect to the March 12, 2026 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, we recommend that the Agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, to be confirmed.

9. Presentations

9.1 Proposed Eco-ablism in Food Systems Event

4 - 5

Purpose: Information/Update

Memorandum dated February 19, 2026 from Climate Action Specialist Danielle Slongo providing information and requesting Committee feedback on event planning details.

10. Minutes of Previous Meeting

6 - 12

The Minutes of Meeting 02-2026 Accessibility Advisory Committee, held on February 12, 2026 to be confirmed.

11. Municipal Accessibility Survey Content Update

13 - 14

Purpose: Review & Approval

Approval of the updated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Survey content.

12. Roundtable of Accessibility Issues

Members to report on accessibility issues encountered in the community.

13. Working Group Updates

14. New Business

15. 2026 Meeting Schedule

Meetings of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be scheduled from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the West Thunder Community Centre, 915 Edward Street.

Thursday, April 9, 2026

Thursday, May 14, 2026

Thursday June 11, 2026

Thursday, September 10, 2026

Committees of Council will not meet in October and November due to the 2026 Municipal Election. A meeting may be scheduled if Administration needs to review projects or provide information.

16. Adjournment

Memorandum

TO: Accessibility Advisory Committee

FROM: Danielle Slongo, Climate Action Specialist
Growth – Strategy & Engagement

DATE: 02/19/2026

SUBJECT: Proposed Eco-Ablism Event

**MEETING &
DATE:** Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting 03/12/2026

The Climate Action Specialist and community partners from the Food Action Network of Northwestern Ontario (FAN-NWO) and EcoSuperior are seeking feedback on a proposed Eco-Ableism in Food Systems event. We would appreciate the opportunity to present the event proposal to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and receive their input.

Event Overview

The Eco-Ableism in Food Systems event will bring together a small group of community members to explore how disability justice, environmental sustainability, and food access are connected, with a special focus on how ableism can appear in local zero-waste (single-use) programs.

The goals of this event are to:

- Build a shared understanding of eco-ableism and disability justice across Thunder Bay's food, environmental, and municipal sectors to help create a foundation for future collaboration, consultation, and action.
- Identify barriers, gaps, and opportunities for more inclusive food and environmental practices.
- Develop early recommendations for cross-sector action and policy change.
- Centre people with lived experience in the event's design, facilitation, and reporting to help ensure safe, consent-based participation.

FAN-NWO will use the findings from this event to create a short, easy-to-read summary resource. This resource will support advocacy, policy discussions, and future programs and events. It may also help inform connections to FAN-NWO's Food Summit this fall.

Questions for the Accessibility Advisory Committee

1. Are there any major concerns or risks we should address before moving ahead with this event?
2. Are there local or regional projects we should learn from, partner with, or avoid repeating?
3. Are there any topics, types of questions, or facilitation styles we should avoid?
4. What accessibility supports should we plan for?
5. Are there trusted local service providers we should work with to provide this support (for example, ASL interpreters, live captioning, or air-quality supports)?
6. How much do these services generally cost?
7. Are there specific tools or resources we should use to guide facilitation, consent, and community agreements?
8. What are fair honoraria rates and best practices when working with people who have lived experience?
9. Are there accessible and trusted venues you would recommend for this type of gathering?
10. Would the Committee be willing to review and give feedback on a draft engagement plan before the event?

Conclusion

The Climate Action Specialist, FAN-NWO, and EcoSuperior would greatly appreciate any feedback the Accessibility Advisory Committee can share on this topic. We are in the early stages of planning this event and want to make sure it is as helpful and meaningful as possible for the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Danielle Slongo nee Thom (she/her) | Climate Action Specialist

Strategy & Engagement Division, Growth Department

City of Thunder Bay

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Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, February 12, 2026, 1:00 p.m.
West Thunder Community Centre**

1. Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting 02-2026

Chair: Samantha Zrobin

2. Members

Lyric Allin, Caregiver to a Person with a Disability
Mayor Ken Boshcoff, Council Representative
John Gobeil, Developmental Disability Representative
Todd Kennedy, Service Agency Representative
Tara Lennox, Learning Disability Representative
Ulysses Patola, Citizen Representative
Robert Tinsley, Citizen Representative
George Saarinen, Hard of Hearing/Late Deafened Representative
Tessa Soderberg, Citizen Representative
John (Rob) Wheeler, Mobility Disability Representative
Samantha Zrobin, Brain Injury Representative

3. Officials

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk
Kayla Scully, Municipal Accessibility Specialist
Wendy Handy, Coordinator - Boards, Committees & Special Projects

4. Guests

Matthew Furioso, Manager - Operations & Standards - Transit Services
Amanda Nason, Supervisor - Customer Care & Administrative Services - Transit

Services

Jessy Bogacki, Program Supervisor - Adult Fitness, Wellness & Inclusion Services

Matthew Lawrence, Mobility Coordinator - Infrastructure & Operations

5. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Samantha Zrobin called the meeting to order and a roundtable of introductions followed.

6. Communication Process

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk provided an overview of the communication process.

Tara Lennox agreed to manage the speaker's list.

7. Disclosures

None.

8. Agenda Approval

A member raised a question relative to the agenda items to clarify if there was one or two presentations occurring. It was clarified that there was one deputation and one presentation outlined on the agenda.

MOVED BY: George Saarinen

SECONDED BY: Tara Lennox

WITH RESPECT to the February 12, 2026 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, we recommend that the Agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business be confirmed.

CARRIED

9. Deputations

9.1 Lift + Transit Services

Purpose: Deputation

Correspondence dated October 30, 2025 from Kasia Piech requesting to provide a deputation relative to Lift + Transit Services.

A presentation was made by Tyler Henrikson, accompanied by a delegation, to speak of concerns relative to Lift+ Transit Services. A petition was received with 159 signatures.

A member of the delegation asked what the next steps would be.

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk responded that a formal record of the petition would be made and brought forward to Council, and concerns would be taken back to Administration for follow up.

A member of the Committee asked about hand-to-hand support for riders that need it, and raised concern that it doesn't always happen when needed.

Matthew Furioso, Manager – Operations & Standards – Transit Services responded to the deputation and questions with an update on current actions being taken by Transit, including:

- Overhauling of the booking and transit route system is currently underway. There should be a new system in place this year that will be more streamlined and efficient in planning routes and responding to calls for bookings.
- Staffing shortages have caused most of the cancellations/scheduling difficulties and new staff are being hired and trained at this time.
- Booking process should improve with new software system and reduce call times to approximately 2 minutes. Online booking will also be available with the new system.
- Complaints need to be brought forward so they can be investigated when they happen. Videos are on all busses, so complaints can be reviewed when they are known.

A concern was raised that taxi drivers are not trained the same as Lift+ drivers and this can create an unsafe situation for riders.

A member asked if it could be possible to have taxi scripts made available at locations other than Transit as it can be difficult to get there.

Administration will take that back and look at options.

A member raised a concern that taxi's are starting to charge riders when they are getting loaded into the vehicle and this is not allowed.

Administration will investigate this concern and speak to taxi companies.

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk advised members to bring this concern to Bylaw Enforcement as it is within their jurisdiction.

A discussion was held relative to the number of busses available, and if more busses would help.

Matthew Furioso responded that the City has 27 busses but only 19 are in use due to staff shortages. Further discussion took place regarding the shortage of drivers and the leading causes of the driver shortage. Even with current recruitment efforts, the selection and training process takes weeks.

The Chair thanked the debutants for their presentation and thanked Transit Services for attending the meeting.

Following the departure of the group and Transit guests, Mayor Ken Boshcoff addressed the Committee to thank them for their work and dedication to pushing accessibility forward in our community.

The meeting was recessed at 2:05pm.

The meeting was reconvened at 2:15pm

10. Presentations

10.1 Low Speed Vehicles and Enclosed Mobility Scooters

Purpose: Information/Update

Memorandum dated January 28, 2026 from Mobility Coordinator Matthew Lawrence providing information and requesting an opportunity to provide an update relating to low-speed vehicles and enclosed mobility scooters within the city.

A presentation was made to the Committee to further clarify mis-information that is circulating regarding the use of low-speed vehicles and enclosed mobility scooters. This information includes topics such as:

- Clarify MTO pilot project and that the City is not participating in the pilot project.
- As there is no Bylaw, the use of low-speed vehicles is not allowed.
- Mobility scooters (enclosed or otherwise) are permitted as assistive devices.
- Retailers are selling vehicles without proper clarity or definition.

- Concerns about enforcement and how to define LSV's.
 - LSV's are like a car, heavier and wider than scooters, they require a license, insurance, and have car-like features.
 - Scooters are smaller and lighter with handle bars (but some have steering wheels) and travel at pedestrian speeds.
- Scooters can travel on Multi-Use trails as pedestrians would.
- E-bikes/LSV's are on those trails and shouldn't be, but enforcement is very difficult to catch at the time of infraction.
- TBPS is receiving training on the difference and how to provide enforcement.

A discussion was held relative to concerns about motorized mobility devices being used on sidewalks because of traffic, but then also being pushed onto roadways in other circumstances due to poor sidewalk conditions.

Matthew Lawrence clarified that mobility scooters on the roadway should be following pedestrian rules (i.e. travel into oncoming traffic). It was also discussed that adding trails is very costly, but it is part of future plans to expand.

A question was asked about the AAC being able to support the progress of this development and of accessibility training moving forward.

A member asked about the number of accessible spots required at businesses and location throughout the City.

Kayla Scully, Municipal Accessibility Specialist responded that the AODA sets the rules for the minimum standards.

11. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of Meeting 01-2026 Accessibility Advisory Committee, held on January 8, 2026 to be confirmed.

MOVED BY: Ulysses Patola

SECONDED BY: Tara Lennox

THAT the Minutes of Meeting 01-2026 Accessibility Advisory Committee, held on January 8, 2026 be confirmed.

CARRIED

12. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Required Annually

Under Section 3.17, Procedural By-law 51/2021, A By-law to govern the proceedings of Council and its Committees - Purpose and Responsibilities, requires an annual review of the Terms of Reference.

At the March 12, 2025 AAC meeting of the AAC, Administration advised that the review of the Terms of Reference for all 19 Advisory Committees of Council had been completed, and that no fundamental changes to the Terms of Reference for the AAC were made; and a recommendation was passed by the AAC to accept the Draft Terms of Reference dated March 12, 2025 as presented; and subsequently ratified by City Council on May 5, 2025.

Document entitled "Accessibility Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference - April 9, 2025 - ratified May 5, 2025" attached, for information.

The Terms of Reference were reviewed and a discussion was held relative to open houses being offered in addition to regularly scheduled meetings during an election year when meeting numbers are reduced.

It was suggested that any further questions or concerns be forwarded to the Office of the City Clerk for assistance.

13. Roundtable of Accessibility Issues

Members to report on accessibility issues encountered in the community.

13.1 55 Plus Health Fair

Not an accessibility issue, but a suggestion to see if the AAC is interested in attending the event to raise awareness of the activities of the Committee.

Kayla to look into this possibility.

13.2 Transit attendance at future meetings

A member asked if Brad Loroff from Transit can be at the next meeting.

Jeff Walters clarified that AAC matters go to the Standing Committee for review, but that no information is available at this time. Matter will be noted for future meetings.

13.3 Snow Clearing on busy streets

A concern was raised regarding slow clearing on Arthur Street and Edward Street and that high use areas should be prioritized.

13.4 Garbage Removal Service

A member would like to raise awareness that supports are available for garbage collection if you call for help with service. This information should be made available to residents.

13.5 Accessibility Advisory Committee support

A member asked if the AAC has any influence on City planning.

Jeff Walters, Deputy City Clerk stated that feedback is always welcome.

14. Working Group Updates

15. New Business

16. 2026 Meeting Schedule

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Committees of Council will not meet in October and November due to the 2026 Municipal Election. A meeting may be scheduled if Administration needs to review projects or provide information.

17. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

All remaining items were deferred to the next meeting on March 12, 2026 at 1:00pm.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Survey

1. Are you: (Check one)
 - A person with a disability
 - A person who supports a friend or family member with a disability
 - A paid worker who supports a person with a disability
2. Have you faced any physical barriers when entering a City of Thunder Bay facility?
3. Have you faced any barriers with customer service at a City facility? If so, please describe. For example; receiving information or communicating with staff
4. Have you faced barriers while attending any City events? If so, please describe these barriers. Please include the event and location.
5. Have you experienced any accessibility upgrades in other cities that you would like to see in Thunder Bay?
6. What is your main mode of transportation in the summer? (Check one)
 - Conventional Transit (Bus)
 - Specialized Transit (Lift+)
 - Active Transportation (walking/cycling/using a mobility device)
 - Drive yourself or get a ride in personal vehicle
 - Taxis or ride-sharing
7. What is your main mode of transportation in the winter? (Check one)
 - Conventional Transit (Bus)
 - Specialized Transit (Lift+)
 - Active Transportation (walking/cycling/using a mobility device)
 - Drive yourself or get a ride in personal vehicle
 - Taxis or ride-sharing
8. Please describe any transportation barriers you may have faced.
9. Is there a certain time of year when you face more barriers? (Check one)
 - Spring
 - Summer
 - Winter
 - Autumn

(Comment box provided)
10. Have you faced any barriers when voting in a Municipal election? If so, please describe. Include the voting location and/or method of voting.

11. How do you learn about the City and City-run events? Have you faced any barriers in accessing information? If so, please describe.

12. Have you heard of Thunder Bay's Accessibility Advisory Committee?

Yes

No

13. Have you heard of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)?

Yes

No

14. Do you know who to contact if you experience a barrier when accessing a City building, program, or event?

Yes, if so then who?

No

15. Other comments