

# **Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

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## **1. Name of Committee**

The Committee shall be named the “Accessibility Advisory Committee”. The accepted acronym will be AAC.

## **2. Background and Assumptions**

On December 14, 2001, the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA, 2001) was passed by the Provincial Government. On September 30, 2002, a further proclamation was brought into law which added specific accessibility obligations for the government of Ontario, municipalities, and other scheduled organizations including public transit organizations, school boards, hospitals, colleges and universities. Under the legislation, municipalities with populations over 10,000 are required to establish municipal accessibility advisory committees, develop annual accessibility plans and make them public.

By resolution of Council, an Accessibility Advisory Committee was established to advise City Council on the development and implementation of the annual Municipal Accessibility Plan in accordance with the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001 (Report No. 2002.334-Community Recreation).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA, 2005) continued the requirement for a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. This Act includes a set of Standards, consolidated on July 1, 2016 as O. Reg. 191/11 “Integrated Accessibility Standards”. The Integrated Accessibility Standards combines accessibility standards in six areas: general requirements, information and communications, employment, transportation, design of public spaces, and customer service. It also includes requirements for compliance and enforcement. Legislative requirements for Accessibility Plans to implement the Standards were passed in the Regulation. The Design of Public Spaces Standard (Accessibility Standards for the built Environment) (O. Reg. 413/12) was consolidated in Regulation 191/11 on January 1, 2013. The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O. Reg. 429/07) was consolidated in Regulation 191/11 on July 1, 2016. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario monitors compliance with the Regulations. Failure to comply will result in fines.

In February 2013, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (the body overseeing the compliance of the AODA) became a part of the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. Prior to this date, the AODA was part of the Ministry of

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Community and Social Services. In 2018, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility became responsible for the AODA, 2001.

It is assumed that the legislative requirement under the AODA, 2005 and the ODA, 2001 for an Accessibility Advisory Committee continues.

### **3. Resources and Finances**

An annual budget will be allocated for the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

### **4. Deliverables**

The Committee's deliverables are as follows:

1. To advise City Council on the development and implementation of Municipal Accessibility Plans.
2. To advise City Council on the effectiveness of the Plan and the City's progress in meeting legislative standards under the AODA, 2005 and ODA, 2001.
3. To advise City Council on issues related to people with disabilities within programs, services, and facilities provided by the City of Thunder Bay
4. To inform and consult annually with the community about the Municipal Accessibility Plan.
5. To provide community leadership on issues related to people with disabilities as they relate to the City of Thunder Bay's programs, services, and facilities.

### **5. Membership and Responsibility**

#### Committee Composition

The Committee, referred to as the Accessibility Advisory Committee, will be comprised of up to 15 Community Members and 1 Councillor appointed by resolution of City Council.

Community membership will include persons with the following disabilities:

- Hard of hearing or late deafened
- Mental Health and Addiction
- Physical and Mobility disability
- Developmental disability

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- Visually impaired or blind
- Brain injured
- Senior with a disability
- Parent/guardian of a child/youth with a disability
- Caregiver to a person with a disability
- Learning disability
- Speech impairment

As well, community membership will include representation from:

- Citizen at large (3)
- Service agency with mandate/responsibility for persons with disabilities
- City Councillor

If the AAC is unable to obtain a representative from one or more of the above communities, the AAC will attempt to meet with community representatives for the vacant position(s) on an annual basis, in order to provide them with updates on the Committee's deliverables, and to receive feedback on the Municipal Accessibility Plan.

### *Ex-Officio Members*

A staff member of the Office of the City Clerk will be the secretary to the Committee, and will provide administrative support, including coordinating the distribution of agendas and accessibility supports (ie. Interpretation services) and coordinating transportation, if required.

The Municipal Accessibility Specialist will provide information to the Committee, support activities do the Committee, where required, and facilitate the review of the Municipal Accessibility Plans with the Committee.

### *Term of Office*

Citizen members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be appointed to staggered four year terms to provide an overlap of terms and continuity of experience. Council representatives shall be appointed for their elected term or annually, at the discretion of City Council. A Committee member may have membership renewed twice, thereby not serving longer than a maximum of 12 consecutive years. A Committee member may serve more that 12 consecutive years should there be no other applicants for the position.

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### *Chair and Vice-Chair*

The voting members of the Committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually at the first committee meeting of the calendar year.

The role of the Chair is to ensure that the Committee functions properly, that there is full and respectful participation during meetings, that all relevant agenda items are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out. The Chair will also work with Administration to review agenda items, minutes, reports, and memoranda as required.

The Chair will be the primary media contact for the committee. The Chair may appoint another member of the AAC to be the contact when necessary. It is expected that committee members will not represent the AAC to the public or media without prior approval by the Chair.

The Vice-Chair will assume the role of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable to fulfill their duties, or when designated by the Chair to do so.

### *Attendance*

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the committee as is reasonably possible, advising the Chair in advance of any absence. Should a member fail to attend three consecutive meetings, the appointment to the Committee will be subject to review.

## **6. Governance**

### *Objectives*

The Committee will make recommendations to City Council on Municipal Accessibility Plans. The Committee will provide feedback to the City on all requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA), and Accessibility Standards, including Site Plan Controls, new builds and renovations of facilities. The Committee will also provide input on best practices, including but not limited to the City of London Facilities Accessibility Design Standards.

### *Reporting Relationship to Council/Administration*

Updates, projects and initiatives will be reported back to City Council through Committee minutes. In addition, the Committee will present the Municipal Accessibility Plan, and such reports and information it deems appropriate, to

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Committee of the Whole, so as to inform Council and the community at large of the Committee's activities.

### *Voting Rights*

Voting on motions and questions before the Committee shall be in accordance with the procedural rules of City Council and Committees of Council (Procedural By-law No. 128-2012 – November 26, 2012).

### *Quorum*

A quorum of half the voting members plus one voting member shall be required for carrying out the business of the Committee. All other members may participate in discussions and debates on matters before the Committee and provide information, advice and assistance to the Committee.

### *Terms of Reference*

The Terms of Reference are to be reviewed by the Committee at the beginning of every year, at which time any changes will be approved by City Council.

### *Working Groups*

At times working groups may be required to facilitate the work of the Committee. Participants on these working groups will be primarily members of the Committee; resource people from the community may be invited to participate.

## **7. Timeline**

The Committee shall meet a minimum of eight times per year, including the annual Public Open House. Working groups established to meet the objectives of the Committee may meet more frequently, as required.

## **8. Contact**

The Municipal Accessibility Specialist, Office of the City Clerk, will be the administrative resource for the Committee.

Correspondence and agenda materials are to be directed to the assigned Committee Coordinator in the Office of the City Clerk.