

To: Debbie Shields  
City Clerk

May 9, 2018

From: Tim Higgins  
Accessibility Coordinator

Copy: Chief Administrative Officer  
Directors

Subject: Accessibility Advisory Committee  
2017 Year End Report and 2018 Proposed Work Plan  
File: A-1410-007-18

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The Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is pleased to present its 2017 Year End Report and 2018 Proposed Work Plan.

## **2017 Year End Report**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee continued to strive to provide information and recommendations for Council that are proactive with a view to placing Pickering at the forefront of accessibility in the Province. The anticipated rapid growth of the City of Pickering has continued to provide opportunities to create a more integrated and inclusive community. The Committee has consulted, collaborated, and provided advice to enhance inclusion and accessibility in the City of Pickering.

Specifically, the Accessibility Advisory Committee achieved the following in 2017:

### **Meetings and Membership**

- Maintained the Committee at its full complement of 10 highly qualified members throughout the year.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee held 10 regular meetings, normally on the second Wednesday of each month, at a variety of City of Pickering sites.

### **Awareness Activities**

- Participated in Pickering's accessibility presentation to a six-person delegation from the People's Republic of China on January 18, 2017, to share Pickering residents' perspectives on accessibility progress and opportunities for improvement.
- Attended and provided input to inform emergent national accessibility legislation at the Accessible Canada Consultation hosted by the Federal Government on February 8, 2017 at the Toronto Chelsea Hotel.

- Attended and made a presentation at the Region of Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee web accessibility forum on Friday, April 21, 2017. P. D’Intino, representing the City of Pickering Advisory Committee Accessibility, provided a keynote address on Information Technology (IT) issues and access to web-based information.
- Staffed a booth with an engaging display and questionnaires for the Canada 150 Youth Forum: A Confederation Journey (1867-2067) held on May 4, 2017 at the Pickering Recreation Complex.
- Presented 2016 accessibility accomplishments and 2017 Work Plan to City Council on May 15, 2017, identifying priorities for the new year. This presentation provided an opportunity for an exchange of information and ideas on the status of accessibility within the community and how it might be improved for the benefit of all City residents.
- AAC members attended the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities held by the Law Society of Upper Canada and reported on leveraging the UN process to advance disability rights.
- Attended a public meeting hosted by TRCA and provided input on the proposed barrier free outdoor learning space at Claremont Field Centre.
- Received a presentation by the Pickering Rouge Canoe Club highlighting youth programs and camps offered as well as plans for development.
- Received a presentation by City staff regarding inclusive recreation programs and events.
- Received a presentation/proposal from Community Services Department on Accessible Employment as a potential Speakers Bureau topic.
- AAC members attended various City events such as the Canada 150 Confederation Journey Youth Fair, the Your City, Artfest, Pickering 101, Civic Awards, RibFest, Canada Day, and the Durham Regional Police Children’s Games to profile the City’s accessibility accomplishments, raise awareness of accessibility issues within the community, and consult with the public on accessibility.
- Received presentations from CNIB community ambassadors.
- Hosted a children’s train at the 2017 Canada Day celebration at Kinsmen Park.

### **Policies, Standards, and Implementation**

- Attended Human Rights, Ableism training session April 27<sup>th</sup> organized by The Human Rights Commission, the Region of Durham, and Trent University.
- Attended June 1<sup>st</sup> webcast of Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Forum.
- AAC member participated in the “United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD): The View from Canada” panel discussion on June 6, 2017.
- The Committee’s advice on accessibility features assisted City staff in going above and beyond the requirements of the AODA as well as the Ontario Building Code with respect to the award-winning Delaney Arena renovations, as well as extensive accessibility improvements to the entrance, vestibule area, and washrooms at the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre in Claremont.

- Committee members submitted a formal memo on November 15, 2017 to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, Customer Service and Transportation Standards Review Committees, making formal recommendations for revisions to the AODA Transportation and Customer Service Standards.
- The AAC received periodic updates and completed its first annual review of the City's accessible parking by-law approved by Council at its December 2016 meeting.
- The AAC received an update on plans to create a highly accessible waterfront at Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park, which would include accessible beach and playground areas.
- Reviewed and provided input to the City of Pickering's Recreation & Parks Master Plan and reviewed local park plans for accessibility.
- Reviewed and provided input to the City of Pickering's 2017 Accessibility Compliance Report to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. The City of Pickering reported full AODA compliance.
- Monitored and provided proactive accessibility advice regarding Pickering's new Operation Centre planning and implementation.
- Provided advice on Canada Day preparations including: extended enhancements to Kinsmen Park pathway system, management of temporary accessible parking, accessible shuttle bus routes/stops, and washrooms.
- Reviewed City renovation plans and toured the City's capital project sites such as the Council Chambers, Pickering Recreation Complex, the Pickering Museum Village Steam Barn, and the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Claremont Community Centre to provide timely accessibility design advice.
- Researched, presented, and shared listening access options (live captioning and assistive listening device systems) to inform planning for Council Chamber renovation.
- Monitored and provided accessibility advice regarding walkway reconstructions, sidewalk retrofits, new multi-use paths, installation of tactile plates at intersections, curb cuts, traffic light timing, special event accessible parking, etc.
- Monitored new staff and volunteer training process related to accessibility.
- AAC member (D. Hughes) reported steady progress on a project to create an integrated mixed-use condominium-style building to provide inclusive accommodations for people with disabilities.
- Provided advice to Community Services Department on ways to more fully engage the accessibility and senior communities in the City's recreation programs.
- Identified opportunities to improve accessible taxicab compliance, safety, and cleanliness.

## **Collaboration**

- Hosted MPP Tracy MacCharles, the Minister Responsible for Accessibility, at the January 11, 2017 AAC meeting to seek to understand the current accessibility goals and priorities of the Province, and to establish mutually supportive working relationships.

- Provided ongoing advice and support to planning of the Canada 150 Youth Forum: A Confederation Journey (1867-2067). This one-day event held on May 4, 2017 celebrated Canada's 150th birthday during National Youth Week, for youth ages 13-19, at the Pickering Recreation Complex. Thematically, the Canada 150 Youth Forum was designed from the top down to pervasively model excellence in accessibility and inclusion. It aimed to actively engage and motivate youth to think well beyond AODA compliance, and challenge them to stretch to envision the fully accessible and inclusive future of Pickering, Ontario, and Canada.
- Provided advice and support to the City of Pickering's first regionally-scoped camp staff training all-day workshop, as part of its Summer Camp Accessibility initiative hosted on Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup> at the Pickering Recreation Complex.
- Provided accessibility advice on continuing development of Kingston Road as the main street of Pickering. Encouraged proactive dialogue regarding the CNR overpass where modifications will be needed to permit barrier-free pedestrian paths of travel.
- AAC members provided planning input and attended the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Durham Regional Police Children's Games held on October 28, 2017 at the Pickering Recreation Complex. The City of Pickering has partnered since 1985 with Durham Regional Police Services to host this inclusive event for athletes with physical disabilities between the ages of 5 to 18.
- Members attended and provided input to the Metrolinx-Durham Region Transit Accessibility Public Meeting on November 27, 2017.
- The AAC appeared as a Delegation at the December 2017 Council meeting to raise accessible transit concerns.
- The AAC received a staff presentation on, and provided input to, Pickering's draft Integrated Transportation Master Plan
- AAC received a presentation and tour regarding the inclusive programs offered at the Pickering Soccer Club. The presentation featured the Club's training and outreach initiatives, partnerships and hosting programs, as well as the Club's numerous activities and events. Opportunities were identified for the AAC to partner with the Pickering Soccer Club in order to achieve synergies through sharing resources and knowledge.
- Durham Regional Transit representatives provided the Committee with an onsite tour of one of its new, accessible buses, presented an overview of services and ridership statistics, and explained eligibility criteria used for special transit services.
- AAC member distributed a questionnaire to seek feedback to inform the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's Employment Standards Review process.
- Collaborated and consulted with Regional and Provincial accessibility professionals and advocates, such as the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP), to stay abreast of emerging issues and successful practices.
- Monitored Regional AAC minutes and attend Regional, Provincial, and Federal learning and networking opportunities; for example, Metrolinx consultation, ONAP conferences, Durham Region Accessibility training and development, etc.

- Monitored emerging legislation, regulations, standards, and policies from the Ontario and Federal governments, for example, with respect to employment of people with disabilities.
- Provided input to the TRCA regarding its proposed barrier-free outdoor learning space at Claremont Field Centre.
- Received a presentation from representatives of the Pickering Clerk's Office regarding accessibility procedures for the 2018 municipal elections.
- AAC met jointly with Pickering's Accessibility Core Staff Team to team-build.
- Received a presentation from representatives of the Pickering Library regarding its new "maker space" and other inclusive initiatives.
- Provided advice/support to the Pickering Public Library regarding its second annual Disability Tax Clinic held in April 2017.
- Fostered/promoted/supported submissions for local, Regional, and Provincial awards and grants to profile Pickering's accessibility achievements and commitment. For example, supported:
  - Successful award nomination of the City of Pickering for the 2017 David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility with respect to the Delaney Arena accessibility enhancements;
  - Successful OMSSA Accessibility Leadership Award nomination regarding the Canada 150 Youth Forum: A Confederation Journey (1867-2067);
  - Two Civic Accessibility Award nominations;
  - The Pickering Rouge Canoe Club grant submission to help fund the building of an accessible dock at the Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park; and
  - Pickering Soccer Club grant submission to provide accessibility training for recreational professionals.

### **Site Plan Application Reviews**

- Worked with City staff through the Site Plan Application Review process to encourage the proactive integration of accessibility considerations into the City planning process.
- Reviewed the following 9 site plan applications, provided accessibility advice and comments, and monitored developers' responsiveness to the Committee's recommendations.

### **Recognition**

- In an awards ceremony held at Queen's Park in June 2017, the City of Pickering accepted the prestigious 2017 David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility with respect to the Delaney Arena accessibility improvements made to viewing areas, dressing rooms, washrooms, lighting fixtures, acoustics, and the rink slab threshold.
- The accessibility-themed City of Pickering Canada 150 Confederation Journey Youth Fair which has been recognized through:

- the 2017 Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) Award for Leadership in Accessibility in May 2017;
- the 2017 Parks and Recreation Ontario Access & Equity Award of Excellence for Advancing Access to Affordable Recreation Programs in Ontario;
- the cover-featured article in Facility Forum, Winter 2017, the magazine of the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association Inc. (ORFA);
- the City of Pickering 2017 Vision Award for Outstanding Team Achievement; and,
- a nomination for a 2018 David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility.
- The inclusive, accessible, and welcoming environment at the Pickering Recreation Complex contributed greatly to the City of Pickering's 2017 recognition by Parks and Recreation Ontario and Playworks as a Platinum Level Youth Friendly Community.
- AAC Member Dan Hughes received the City of Pickering Civic Access Award for Disability Issues on behalf of his organization, the Enhanced Day Program Inc.

## **2018 Proposed Work Plan**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to strive to provide information and recommendations for Council that are proactive with a view to placing the City of Pickering and Durham Region at the forefront of accessibility in the Province. The Committee will consult, collaborate, and partner to enhance inclusion and accessibility in the City of Pickering.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee plans to meet on the second Wednesday of each month, with the exception of July and August.

At the reporting date, the Committee has completed, or plans to continue or complete the following:

### **Awareness Activities**

- Present 2017 accessibility accomplishments and 2018 plan to City Council identifying priorities for the new year. This presentation provides an opportunity for an exchange of information and ideas on the status of Accessibility within the community and how it may be improved for the benefit of all of the City's residents.
- Attend City events for 2018 such as Pickering 101, Your City, Artfest, Accessibility Awareness event at Pickering Town Centre, RibFest, and Canada Day to raise awareness of accessibility achievements and issues within the community.
- Attend and make presentations at Region of Durham Accessibility Advisory Committee regarding enhancing accessible transit.
- Foster/promote/support submissions for local, Regional, and Provincial awards and grants to profile Pickering's accessibility achievements and commitment.

## **Policies, Standards, and Implementation**

- AAC members participated in the Whitby Chamber of Commerce, DiscoverAbility seminar March 15, 2018 which featured Mark Wafer's presentation with respect to Employing People with Disabilities.
- AAC members participated in the March 21, 2018 "Intersection of Race and Accessibility Forum" hosted by the Canadian Alliance on Race and Disability (CARD).
- The AAC received a presentation by City staff, and provided advice regarding upcoming accessibility related capital projects recently approved by Council, such as a number of walkway reconstructions and sidewalk retrofits, which included tactile plate installation at various intersections, as well as multi-use paths. Plans were also discussed for the rehabilitation of the Palmer Bridge (Valley Farm and Finch) deck as well as widening to include sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- Special AAC guest Ather Shabbar from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General and a recent graduate of the Masters of Inclusive program at OCAD University provided a stimulating presentation and discussion with respect to Inclusive Design, explaining the benefits and how it can be used to improve governance and create a more inclusive environment.
- The AAC received information and expressed support for the proposed Notice of Motion presented by Councillors Brenner and Cumming, regarding the licensing of service dogs and the clarification to standards for support animals.
- Monitor and provide proactive accessibility advice regarding Pickering's new Operation Centre planning and implementation.
- Provide advice on Canada Day preparations including: management of temporary accessible parking; accessible bus routes/stops, and washrooms.
- Monitor and provide accessibility advice regarding walkway reconstructions, sidewalk retrofits, installation of tactile plates at intersections, as well as multi-use paths.
- Monitor new staff and volunteer training process related to accessibility.

## **Collaboration**

- In March 2018, Pickering AAC members joined Ajax AAC members to perform a joint accessibility audit of the Ajax Welcome Centre.
- Hosted discussions with Durham Region Transit and Durham Region accessibility coordinators regarding improved standards for specialized accessibility services; the DRT specialized services appeal process; and DRT's accessible customer service.
- Received a presentation by representatives of AutoLux Ltd., operating as Rapid City Transportation. This Pickering-based organization provides non-emergency medical transportation for individuals that require special care, and operates across Ontario. Through discussion, Committee members explored AutoLux' approach to accessible transit customer service.

- Received a presentation from representatives of the Pickering Library regarding its PPL Connect project aimed at strengthening the Library's role in supporting and assisting the community through education and training.
- Received a presentation from representatives of the Pickering Soccer Club regarding its new "In Motion" program, which is an active living program for adults aged 55+, funded by the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund and the Pickering Soccer Club.
- Received a presentation from a representative of WindReach Farms that outlined the various year-round programs for youth and adults with various disabilities offered at the 105 acre, fully accessible, working farm.
- Received a presentation from a representative of Parks Canada to discuss creative partnership opportunities to provide greater accessibility to Rouge National Urban Park, which covers approximately 35 kilometers from north to south and adjoins the City of Pickering on its eastern boundary.
- Received a City staff presentation/update on the progress of the Museum's Conservation Building and provided advice.
- Received a City staff presentation on the new Youth Exceptionalities Camp, which aims to provide more programming for youth with special needs. The camp, for youth between the ages of 13 and 19, and is designed to help them to socialize and integrate into the community and will be held at the Pickering Recreation Complex.
- Received a presentation from a resident to seek support for a proposal to locate the Rouge Park Visitor Centre at the park side location of Meadowvale Road, Toronto, for the Rouge National Park. The Committee provided a letter of support since the proposal would enhance Rouge National Park accessibility.
- Received a presentation from the Pickering Rouge Canoe Club seeking a letter of support to build accessible docks at Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park.
- Collaborate and consult with Regional and Provincial accessibility professionals and advocates, such as the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals (ONAP) to stay abreast of emerging issues and successful practices.
- Monitor Regional AAC minutes and attend Regional, Provincial, and Federal learning and networking opportunities.
- Consult with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), Parks Canada, and Altona Forest representatives to consider innovative methods of providing access to rugged, natural outdoor spaces.
- Monitor emerging legislation, regulations, standards, policies, and practices from the Federal, Ontario and other municipal governments; for example, regarding employment, transportation, affordable housing, customer service, health, education, the built environment, youth programs after the age of 21, etc.

### **Site Plan Application Reviews**

- Continue to work with City staff through the Site Plan Application Review process to encourage the proactive integration of accessibility considerations into the planning process.

## Priorities

Going forward, the Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee has identified the following areas of priority:

- encouraging and highlighting further examples of accessibility excellence in City programs, services, and facilities;
- providing more accessible housing;
- facilitating employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
- improving transit accessibility; and
- expanding programs for youth with disabilities after turning 18.

Submitted on behalf of the current Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee:

Peter Bashaw, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Andrew Doucette, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Bianca D'Souza, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Edward Fulton, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Daniel Hughes, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Vincenza Ronaldi, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Megan Thorpe Ross, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Jeannette Whynot, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
Susan Wilkinson, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member  
David Wysocki, Pickering Accessibility Advisory Committee Member

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