

CITY of WELLAND
Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PURPOSE

The City of Welland Accessibility Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as the AAC) acts, as mandated by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (hereafter referred to as the AODA Act), in an advisory capacity to City Council by recommending, promoting and facilitating a barrier-free City for all citizens, including persons with disabilities. The AAC will work to further the City's commitment to its Accessibility Mandate with an understanding that accessibility planning needs to be integrated into all elements of the community to create a universally accessible place to live. (see Appendix III).

2.0 OBJECTIVES/GOALS

The Welland AAC will fulfill its mandate through:

1. The review of municipal policies, programs and services;
2. The identification, removal and prevention of barriers faced by persons with disabilities; and
3. The Committee shall advise the Council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports. (as per the AODA, s.29 (4)(a)).

3.0 DUTIES

As required by the AODA (2005), the AAC shall be responsible for:

- a) Advising Council regarding the annual Accessibility Plan generally, including the implementation and effectiveness of Resolution 2018-185 (May 15, 2018, Council Meeting of Welland) to ensure that it identifies, removes and prevents barriers in the City's by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services.
- b) Advising Council by reviewing selected site plans on the accessibility of buildings, structures or premises (or parts thereof) that the City owns, purchases, constructs, significantly renovates, leases, or a facility used as a City municipal building or complexes (see Appendix II).
- c) Performing other functions that are specified in the Regulations to the 2005 Act when they are developed.
- d) Consulting and initial advising for all related City accessibility activities and reports as per Ontario's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation — (Customer Service Standard; Employment Standard; Information and Communication Standard; Design of Public Spaces Standard; the Transportation Standard). (see Appendix I).
- e) Establishing subcommittees/working groups as deemed necessary by the City to address specific issues connected to the accessibility of people with disabilities (e.g., Parks and Recreation).

(See Appendix I for Legislative requirements)

4.0 REPORTING STRUCTURE

The AAC will primarily report to Council through the Boards, Agencies, and Commissions Reports item on the General Committee Agenda or at Council meeting as required by the AODA regarding its annual Accessibility Plan.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION AND SIZE

A minimum of three (3) and a maximum of eleven (11).

6.0 VOTING MEMBERS

The AAC will have a maximum of eleven (11) voting members and will be composed as follows:

- a) The majority of members shall be people with disabilities and/or immediate family members, support persons. These committee members shall be representative of different types of visible and invisible disabilities defined in the ODA, 2001 and AODA, 2005, such as persons with physical (visual, speech, hearing, deaf, brain injury, use of a wheelchair); cognitive (intellectual impairment); perceptual (learning disability); and mental health disabilities;
- b) One member of the City Council; and
- c) A maximum of (3) stakeholders who may, or may not, have a disability.

7.0 NON-VOTING RESOURCES — SUBCOMMITTEES

Any advisory support required by a subcommittee of the AAC that is struck will be determined on an ad-hoc basis, dependent on the needs of the subcommittee and the availability of resources. In addition, the AAC will engage non-voting resources who will serve only in an advisory capacity:

- a) One member of the AAC Committee;
- b) Staff support from various City Departments, as required; and
- c) Representatives from various community organizations and agencies, as required.

8.0 MEMBERSHIP SELECTION AND TERM

- a) AAC members will be appointed by City Council.
- b) AAC vacancies shall be publicly advertised.
- c) Members of the AAC should be qualified electors of the City of Welland, pursuant to the *Municipal Elections Act*.
- d) The AAC is required to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.
- e) Members shall be appointed for a four (4) year term, concurrent with the term of Council.

9.0 ROLE OF CHAIR

- a) The AAC Chair coordinates and directs meetings using Robert's Rules of Conduct.
- b) Reviews agenda items with the Committee Coordinator and City's Accessibility Staff.
- c) Serves as an *ex-officio* member of subcommittees and attends subcommittee meetings when necessary.
- d) Acts as a liaison with the City's Accessibility Staff on a regular basis.

10.0 ROLE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee members will:

- a) Ensure that the mandate of AAC is being fulfilled.
- b) Be familiar with the AODA, its regulations and the Terms of Reference for the Committee.
- c) Notify the Committee Coordinator if they are unable to attend AAC meetings in a timely fashion to ensure that quorum can be reached for all meetings.
- d) Attend monthly AAC meetings.
- e) Provide the Chair with accurate, factual information regarding agenda items.
- f) Contribute their expertise actively during meetings.
- g) When required, advise Council on matters relating to accessibility.

11.0 STAFF SUPPORT

- a) The City shall provide a staff team (hereafter referred to as the Staff Accessibility Resource Team) to support the AAC and to assist in the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities is necessary.
- b) City staff representatives shall provide input at AAC meetings. In addition, the Staff representative will follow up on action items resulting from AAC meetings to ensure implementation.

12.0 RESIGNATIONS

In order to maintain a high level of commitment, members may be asked to resign if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good cause.

13.0 MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

- a) Each Member of the AAC is an independent representative to the Committee and does not represent the concerns of only one disability or group. The members shall work together for the purpose of developing a common approach that is reasonable and practical.
- b) Members are expected to provide their expertise actively during AAC meetings and contribute to discussion.
- c) Members shall declare any situation that is, or has the potential to be, a conflict of interest.

- d) Members will follow the directives as outlined in the Advisory Committee Handbook.

14.0 REMUNERATION/REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Members of the AAC serve without remuneration, except those members who are people with disabilities. Members with a disability will be provided resources related to their disability that are deemed necessary for them to fully participate in the Committee (e.g., sign language interpretation services, Braille translation services, transportation, support care services, etc.).

15.0 MEETINGS

- a) Hybrid Meetings will be held every month (except July and August, when no regular meetings are held) or on an as-needed basis when called by the Chair.
- b) The duration of a meeting will be the minimum of 1 hour, and can be extended to 1.5 hours at the discretion of the Chair.

11.0 QUORUM

Quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members holding office at the time of the meeting

12.0 DEFINITIONS

“DISABILITY” means,

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”)

“BARRIER” means

- a) anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

APPENDIX I – LEGISLATION

Accessibility requirements

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is the law that sets out a process for developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. Government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow the standards.

If a municipality has 10,000 residents or more, its government must create a local accessibility advisory committee (AAC) and involve the committee in your planning processes. Two or more municipalities may set up a joint committee, instead of having their own separate committees.

Accessibility laws and standards help to reduce and remove barriers and make Ontario more inclusive for everyone.

A Municipality must consult the accessibility advisory committee about:

- Establishing, reviewing and updating your multi-year accessibility plans.
- Developing accessible design criteria in the construction, renovation or placement of bus stops and shelters.
- Determining the proportion of on-demand accessible taxis needed in your community.
- The need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces when building new or making major changes to existing on-street parking spaces.
- Building new or making major changes to existing recreational trails to help determine particular trail features.
- The needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities in their community when building new or making major changes to existing outdoor play spaces.
- The design and placement of rest areas along the exterior path of travel when building new or making major changes to existing exterior paths of travel

(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-accessibility-advisory-committees>)

Appendix II – AODA Planning for Growth

The City of Welland must provide site plans and drawings from developers to their accessibility advisory committee in a timely manner when requested (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/municipal-accessibility-advisory-committees#section-5>).

Examples include:

- subdivisions
- municipal offices
- community centres
- recreational centers

A Municipality must seek the committee's advice on accessibility for people with disabilities on buildings that the municipal council:

- constructs
- purchases
- significantly renovates
- leases or declares a municipal capital facility

Elements of a Site Plan that impact accessibility could include:

- buildings
- driveways
- entrances
- curbs or ramping
- parking areas
- sidewalks
- landscaping
- fences
- exterior lighting
- municipal services

Appendix III – Niagara Priority Profiles

Niagara Priority Profiles (2017) states that 28.9% of the region's population has a disability.