

Terms of Reference for Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee

Mandate

Effective 2005, the Provincial Government, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA), mandated every municipality in Ontario with a population of more than 10,000 persons establish a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. In addition, the Province also mandated the majority of the members on the Committee shall be persons with disabilities. The City of Niagara Falls Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee was formed in 1997 to deal with accessibility issues for disabled persons. The Committee's goals are to educate the public, and increase barrier free accessibility in our community for both residents and visitors.

Mission Statement

At the City of Niagara Falls, we value accessibility, and look to provide accessible options with all our services. It is our mission to educate the public, and increase barrier-free accessibility in our community for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

Goal/Purpose

To advise the City of Niagara Falls regarding the preparation of an annual accessibility plan. In doing so, the plan will endeavor to address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the City's by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services, including the following components:

- A report on the steps the municipality has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities;
- How the municipality assess its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services;
- A list of by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services the municipality will review in the coming year to identify barriers; and
- How the municipality intends to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the coming year.

The Committee may also advise on other municipal obligations under the Act, as follows:

- Considerations related to access for persons with disabilities when buying goods and services;
- Development of accessibility plans for municipally administered, sub-contracted or licensed transit providers in consultation with person with disabilities;
- Access considerations in site plan approvals;
- Improved access to municipal elections and selection of voting locations; and
- Other matters as directed by Council.

Duties of the Committee and Council

As per Section 29 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 (AODA), the Mayors Accessibility Advisory Committee, as well as City Council both have specific duties and functions to fulfill under this Provincial legislation. These duties include the following:

Duties of Committee

- (4) The committee shall,
- (a) Advise the council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the council may seek its advice under subsection (5);
 - (b) Review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the *Planning Act* that the committee selects; and
 - (c) Perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations. 2005, c. 11, s. 29 (4).

Duties of Council

- (5) The council shall seek advice from the committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises,
- (a) That the council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;
 - (b) For which the council enters into a new lease; or
 - (c) That a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered into with the council in accordance with section 110 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* or section 252 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*. 2005, c. 11, s. 29 (5); 2006, c. 32, Sched. C, s. 1.

Composition

The Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee is comprised of between ten (10) to fourteen (14) members, and as appointed by City Council at each municipal election. The term of membership shall be four (4) years.

An ideal committee composition would essentially be comprised of between ten (10) to fourteen (14) members and based on the following criteria:

- One (1) member from City Council, if interested and appointed by Council. While this is not mandatory under the AODA Legislation, it is encouraged.
- The **majority of committee members** [approximately eight (8) to ten (10) members], shall be persons with disabilities, **as per AODA Legislation**.
- The committee also seeks the assistance of 1-2 members from the community with knowledge, experience and familiarity with AODA Legislation, Building Code and Planning Act matters.
- Fillings of vacancies for the committee during the Council Term will be considered by City Council, if necessary.

Committee Chair

A chairperson will be elected from Committee members for the four (4) year term. This will be determined at the first meeting of the New Year following the municipal election to preside over meetings and Committee business.

Administrative Support and Staff Liaison

The Committee will receive administrative support similar to the support provided for other committees of Council. This will include recording of minutes, staff support with meeting preparations, support necessary to convening an accessible meeting and other required supports.

The Committee will receive staff technical support for each of the business areas of the corporation through designated staff of each department as represented on the cross-departmental committee charged with implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Cross Departmental Staff Accessibility Committee

The following departments have been identified to form part of the Cross Departmental Accessibility Advisory Committee and to assist the Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee with technical support as needed:

Human Resources and AODA Compliance	(Manager of Client Services)
Building Services and Property Standards	(Chief Building Official)
Planning and new development matters	(Manager of Planning)
Recreation Facility matters	(Manager of Recreation)
Municipal Works	(Manager of Municipal Roadways)
Traffic matters	(Manager of Transportation Engineering)
Transit matters	(Manager of Transit Operations)
Election & Council matters	(City Clerk)
Website matters	(Web Services Administrator)

Budget

The City of Niagara Falls Mayor's Accessibility Advisory Committee shall have an annual operating budget to be used for valid Committee purposes as detailed in the budget approved by City Council for the current year. The Staff Liaison will work with the Committee Chairperson and submit a budget request each year to City Council for the consideration and approval of the City of Niagara Falls. There shall be no compensation payable to the members of the Committee.

Meetings

The Committee will endeavor to meet at least six (6) times per year, and may meet more frequently if needed. Half, plus one (1) members of the current membership shall constitute a quorum.

The Committee meetings will be held at an accessible location as determined by the Committee members. Meetings will be open to the public.

Committee meetings will be governed by the City of Niagara Falls Committee Protocol for Committees of Council.

Agenda and Minutes

Staff will prepare Committee meeting agendas with input from the Chair and Committee members. Committee meeting minutes will be prepared by staff and forwarded to each Committee member. Members will advise staff in advance of any amendments that they believe is required to the minutes. Staff will then submit a copy of the minutes to the City Clerk.