



Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 11:30 a.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

Committee Members Present: Roger Koert – Chair Presiding, Diane Sims, Jamie Pritchard, Andy Mark, Geoff Krauter, Councillor Bonnie Henderson

Staff Present: Oonagh Vaucrosson – Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Nathan Bottema – Project Engineer, Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Also Present: Kathleen Barry

1. Call to Order

Roger Koert, Chair presiding, called the AAC meeting to order at 11:41 a.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgement and a Moment of Silent Reflection.

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Jamie Pritchard

THAT the minutes from the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting dated June 4, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried

4. Infrastructure Services Update

Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer provided the following update:

- McCarthy Road sidewalk project is complete;
- Forman Street missing sidewalk link (between Huron Street and Britannia Street) is now complete;
- O'Loane Avenue sidewalk installation (between Brown Street and Thomas Street) is underway. A city bus stop will also be installed with concrete running right to the road;
- Sidewalk installation on St. Vincent Street (between Cambria Street and West Gore) is complete;
- Erie Street paving and improvements project is underway;
- Moderwell Street paving is underway;
- Curb drops/parking improvements for (3) requested downtown accessible parking spots were completed in July and August;
- Wellington Street and Trow Avenue curb drops have had a temporary asphalt overlay added to them due to budget constraints and have been identified for repair in the future;
- Additional St. Andrew Street accessible parking spots near the courthouse is still a project that could be completed this year;

Nathan Bottema noted that there is approximately \$25,000.00 remaining in the Engineering budget line for accessibility improvements. The modifications to the accessible parking spots on St. Andrew Street could be completed with these funds.

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Diane Sims

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends the remaining funds in the Engineering Department's 2024 Accessibility Improvement Budget be allocated to completing the accessible parking spots on St. Andrew Street;

AND THAT any funds remaining after the St. Andrew Street accessible parking spots are completed be allocated to replacing priority curb drops identified by Engineering staff. Carried

Mr. Bottema stated a review was done of the York Street parking lot area and the possibility of adding a sidewalk in between the entrances. Unfortunately, due to existing infrastructure, there is not an option to install a proper sidewalk on that side of the street.

Vicky Trotter noted that she is completing a management report regarding the installation of curb cuts and a sidewalk/platform across from the bandshell on Veteran's Drive.

Roger Koert noted that the only access point in the Upper Queen's Park parking lot to enter the Park is near the old Duke's eatery. The curb cut has been temporarily repaired with asphalt until it can be permanently fixed.

Motion by Jamie Pritchard

Seconded by Diane Sims

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to Community Services and the Board of Park Management a proper accessible curb cut be completed in the north end of the parking lot adjacent to the Upper Queens playground and an accessible pathway be installed from the curb cut to the playground and picnic area. Carried

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Andy Mark

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to Community Services and the Board of Park Management investigate adding additional accessible parking spots in both parking lots in Upper Queen Park. Carried

Mr. Bottema noted an inquiry was received for Bedford Drive and a possible curb drop at the ball and the sidewalk continues around the ball. He noted that it is a safety issue and that there is a path all the way around for pedestrians to use.

Roger Koert inquired if the AAC could focus on specific areas, such as the recently discussed Gordon Street area, of the missing sidewalk map to work towards accomplishing missing sidewalks. His suggestion is to have the AAC outline and execute a 5-year plan to complete all missing links identified on the missing link sidewalk map in the area between Devon Street to Ontario Street from Romeo Street to C.H. Meier Blvd. With a specific smaller area identified, it may be easier to accomplish. Nathan Bottema explained that there is a budget line for missing sidewalks each year. This particular area is challenging, as there are no curbed sidewalks. In this case, they will identify as local improvements, with residents paying for a portion. The missing link on Gordon

Street is scheduled to be completed in 2025. Mr. Bottema stated if there is a recommendation from the AAC on a specific missing link, it will be considered for future budgets. There are many missing sidewalk links in the entire city and staff try to prioritize them as best as possible. Councillor Henderson suggested that the AAC could consult with ATAC to ensure both committees are aware of priority areas.

Diane Sims requested an update on the possibility of having a multi-use path or sidewalk along Lorne Avenue. Roger Koert stated that this path is identified on the missing sidewalk link map. Some of the gaps have been taken care of, however there are still many areas along Lorne Avenue without sidewalks.

5. Site Plan Review Sub-Committee Update

Oonagh Vaucrosson, Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, provided an update that the Review Sub-Committee reviewed the following plans in June/July/August:

- 54 Lorne Avenue West – 4th submission
- 596 Erie Street – 2nd Phase
- 3188 Vivian Line 37 Long term care home and Retirement home
- 3188 Vivian Line 37 Long term care home and Retirement home – north site application
- 3188 Vivian Line 37 Long term care home and Retirement home – south site application
- 426 Britannia Street
- 753 Ontario Street
- 489 Douro Street

6. Update from the Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator

Oonagh Vaucrosson provided a written report for September to the AAC members and highlighted the following items:

- The Accessibility Steering Committee met in August and updates were given by the Accessibility Coordinator about the work of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, web accessibility policy that is being drafted, and the magnus cards and ensuing training around accessible customer training.
- The City is making progress on making its website accessible as the Information Technology department assists the Accessibility Coordinator in understanding the platform and working with the department content creators as they, the Accessibility Coordinator and IT are in training with Monsido to learn about the tool, interpreting and implementing the analytical results that the tool generates.

- There have been previous discussions regarding the complaints process for issues around the City. In the past, the complaints were funneled directly to departments, there was no centralized area to triage them. Beginning in July, all accessibility complaints now come to the Accessibility Coordinator for their awareness. The complaints can be completed online or in person with the Accessibility Coordinator.
- The Mobi Mats had their inaugural use during Stratford Live in June. They were situated in the main tent opposite the band shell.
- The Mobi Mat information sheet has been updated to let people know how they may be used and photographs have been added. The event application form has been updated to include an option to use the Mobi Mats.
- The City of Cambridge has requested the use of the Mobi mats for the viewing of a construction site for their City Councillors, one of whom uses a mobility device. They have recently shared that they are no longer in need of Mobi mats for this specific purpose but will reach out to borrow them in future to consider whether to invest in their own.
- The committee was informed about the reservations that Community Services had expressed around the use of the Mobi Mats and the time that would be needed to install them. The Accessibility Coordinator will be preparing standard operating policy for the use of the mats. The Director of Community Services was invited to share his concerns at an upcoming AAC meeting.

7. Update from Council

No new updates.

8. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

8.1 Launch of the FADM with Perth-Huron Builders Association

Oonagh Vaucrosson has been having ongoing discussions with Melissa Schenk at PHBA. After the summer break, PHBA members will be meeting in early September and this request is listed on their agenda.

8.2 Developing an AAC Incentive Program

No new updates to report. Roger Koert and Vicky Trotter will work on the next steps required to submit a request to Council to create an incentive program.

8.3 Update on Annual Accessibility Award

The annual Accessibility award nominations opened during AccessAbility Week.

The City's Corporate Communications Lead has posted subsequent information regarding nominations being accepted. Andy Mark reported that they have received three nominations so far. The AAC has requested to present the award at the November 24, 2024 Council meeting.

8.4 Update on Accessibility Audits for City of Stratford Facilities

Oonagh Vaucrosson reported the audits of City-owned facilities were completed in June with Mark Hackett, Community Facilities Manager:

- National Stadium, 261 Norfolk Street;
- Dufferin Ball Diamond and Washrooms – 55 Oak Street;
- Dufferin Lions Arena – 55 Oak Street;
- Splash Pad at Anne Hathaway Park – 625 Downie Street;
- Anne Hathaway Park Ball Diamonds and Washrooms – 40 Simcoe Street;
- Cooper Terminal Stratford Transit Washrooms

Reports are in process before they move on to do other locations. They will be doing an audit on the Destination Stratford washrooms as they are looking to complete improvements.

The DEI office covered the expense of lunch for the June audits. Moving forward, the AAC will include meals and refreshments in their budget line to cover expenses such as this when members attend to assist with the audits.

8.5 2024 Budget Review

Vicky Trotter reported that the AAC has spent a small amount of their 2024 budget to cover the transportation costs for meetings, but otherwise have the bulk of their budget remaining. Members discussed the possibility of doing another doorbell program for businesses. Jamie Pritchard will investigate some costs and the AAC can execute the program prior to year-end. Another option discussed is to use the community improvement budget to target a specific curb cut that the AAC deems priority or to purchase an accessible picnic table. Under the materials budget line, new AAC giveaway items could be purchased for use at tradeshow and events.

8.6 Update on AAC Motions

Vicky Trotter stated she will provide quarterly updates on previous motions that the AAC has made and provided the following updates:

- the multi-use path through Arboretum Park is prepped for asphalt and will be completed soon;
- no new update on the Packham Road sports fields regarding the crushed asphalt being used for the multi-use path;
- SERC updates are being included in the 2025 capital draft budget.

*Nathan Bottema no longer present at the meeting (1:15 p.m.)

9. New Business

9.1 2025 AAC Budget Request for Council

AAC members discussed committee plans for 2025 and required budget items such as transportation, events and special projects.

Motion by Diane Sims

Seconded by Andy Mark

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee requests a 2025 budgetary figure of \$5,500.00 from the City of Stratford.

Materials - miscellaneous costs for supplies for tradeshow, events, advertising, multi-media expenses, etc.	\$ 500.00
Meeting Costs – Transportation & Refreshments	\$ 1000.00
AAC Projects - committee costs associated with accessibility improvement events and projects, educational campaigns and community improvement projects, including advertising, materials, consumables, transportation, labour. Potential event during National AccessAbility Week and International Day of Person's with Disabilities	\$2,000.00
Conferences	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$5,500.00

9.2 Provincial Guidelines for Accessible Parking at Nursing Homes and Seniors' Buildings

Councillor Henderson stated that at the recent Council meeting discussing the new Nursing Home development on Vivian Line, she was surprised that the

guidelines for accessible parking for nursing homes is the same as all apartment buildings. They do not take into consideration any additional accessible parking spots at nursing homes or seniors' buildings. She inquired if the City could do something municipally to change the by-law to encourage additional accessible spaces at nursing homes and seniors' buildings within the City. Oonagh Vaucrosson had previously suggested that given the demographic of Stratford, they may wish to consider having more accessible spots than just the minimal amount. Developers did not want to increase the number of spots at that time.

Vicky Trotter will do some research on this issue and bring information back to the AAC for further discussion.

9.3 Non-Accessible Businesses

Councillor Henderson inquired if there is anything that the AAC or the City can do to encourage private businesses to make their businesses accessible. For example, could the Committee send a letter to suggest they look into a lift or a ramp. Vicky Trotter will inquire what the AAC is permitted to do as far as sending correspondence to private businesses. Oonagh Vaucrosson suggested that perhaps the site review committee could do a site review and send them a report. Members questioned if this was possible at a private business. Ms. Vaucrosson stated that if a member uses that building, they can make a suggestion to have a review done. She stated that in Huron County these types of reviews are completed.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the AAC will be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. at the Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

11. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Geoff Krauter

THAT the September 3, 2024, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Start Time: 11:41 A.M.

End Time: 1:33 P.M.