



Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) was held on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

Committee Members Present: Roger Koert – Chair Presiding, Jen Weber, Andy Mark, Joan Jones, Kathleen Barry

Staff Present: Nathan Bottema – Project Engineer, Nolan Campbell - Engineering Design Technician, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Regrets: Diane Sims, Jamie Pritchard, Councillor Bonnie Henderson, Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Roger Koert, Chair presiding, called the AAC meeting to order at 12:04 p.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 Jen Weber

Seconded by Andy Mark

THAT the minutes from the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting dated September 2, 2025 be adopted as printed. Carried

4. Infrastructure Services Update

Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer, provided the following updates:

- The curb cut work that the AAC had previously requested is on the October list and the contractor is aware that these nine locations are to be completed. These areas were previously temporarily padded by asphalt. These requested locations will be covered by the Engineering Departments' 2025 accessibility budget line and will bring the estimated cost of the accessibility work to approximately \$45,000.00 for this year;
- Mr. Bottema has also requested staff clearing snow over the winter keep a list of areas that need attention so that a list can be generated and started early next year;
- Mr. Bottema visited the Packham Sports Field site to see the test section of the trail. He stated that the area is much different from what was used the first time they did the trail. It is solid and smooth, with the loose recycled asphalt as the base under it.

Roger Koert stated he is meeting with a member of the Stratford Soccer Association on October 14, 2025 for a site visit. Mr. Koert stated that it will be interesting to see how the section of trail holds up over the winter and if it is still good in the spring. If it does, this may be a good solution. The AAC could make a motion in the future to recommend a 5-year replacement upgrade plan.

5. Update from the Site Plan Review Sub-Committee

Nolan Campbell, Engineering Design Technician, provided the following updates:

- 67 James Street – in discussion with Planning staff, based on the scope of the project, it may actually be reduced and not come through again for another review and is currently under a formal consultation (FC);
- 93 Trinity Street – A large development on the former Krug Furniture site with significant comments from Engineering staff during the FC. During the next review there may be quite a few changes to look at that could affect accessibility;
- 67 Barron Street (Emily Murphy Centre) – Comments after the previous AAC feedback was received basically stated that because there are no accessible units proposed and accessibility on site is not relevant in terms of that portion of the development. Mr. Campbell will have these comments from Planning later this week and the AAC can review what they have stated;

6. Update from Council – Deferred to Next Meeting

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

7.1 Annual Accessibility Award Update

Staff has received three nominations for this year’s Accessibility Award. Two were for the same facility. Andy Mark will arrange a date for any members who wish to tour the facility. Staff will arrange for the mobility bus that day. The award will be presented at the November 24, 2025 Council meeting.

7.2 Staircase Hand Railings at the Allman Arena

Roger Koert reported that the AAC could make a recommendation to start the process of having hand railings at the Allman included in a future capital budget, as the 2026 draft budgets have already been submitted by staff. Nathan Bottema reported that he was informed by the Community Facilities manager that a contract is going to be awarded shortly for building condition assessments and accessibility audits for City facilities in the coming weeks. Staff anticipates that the potential outcome of this review will include adding railings at the arena and the cost will be included in their 10-year capital forecast.

Motion by Jen Weber

Seconded by Joan Jones

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to develop and design a railing system for the Allman Arena;

AND THAT the project be included in the 2027 budget. Carried

7.3 Accessibility Audits at City Playgrounds

Roger Koert inquired if the upcoming contract for building condition assessments and accessibility audits for City facilities will include parks. Nathan Bottema stated that it is more likely to be strictly buildings. Mr. Bottema received information from the Parks and Forestry Manager that Stratford playgrounds are inspected monthly by a certified playground inspector. They follow a check list to review all the safety aspects of the structures. Beyond safety of service, there does not seem to be items on the check list relating to the grounds, safe access and accessibility. Mr. Bottema did not hear back from the Manager if extra columns could be added to the checklist for accessibility issues.

Motion by Kathleen Barry

Seconded by Andy Mark

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends staff include an additional column on their monthly playground maintenance check list to check that zero threshold is being maintained on ground surface approaches to play structures, such as ramps. Carried

7.4 Update on Tom Patterson Island Bridge

Roger Koert reported that he met with the current Dragon Boat Festival Chair to discuss the bridge to the Tom Patterson Island. The Chair also sees a need to work towards accommodating people over to the Island and has been working on some options and recommendations.

Nathan Bottema stated that it has been left with him to draft a report to Council, essentially stating the cost of removal and replacement of the bridge. Mr. Koert noted that one conversation with the Dragon Boat Chair was that instead of removal and replacement, it was in addition to the existing. A flatter bridge next to the existing bridge could be an option.

8. New Business

8.1 Update on Youth Engagement Event

Kathleen Barry reported she attended the recent “Your City Your Future” event held at the Rotary Complex for all grade 10 students in Stratford. There were lots of presenters and workshop type events for the students to participate in. There were approximately 500 students in attendance and they each received a passport to go around and visit the different booths. Ms. Barry engaged with many students who visited the AAC booth and handed out AAC promo items. There were even a couple of students interested in applying to join the committee. Ms. Barry highly recommends the AAC participating in this event again next year if organizers hold it again.

8.2 SERC Washroom Renovations – Feedback/Comments

AAC Members reviewed the site plans and drawings for the proposed upgrades to the SERC washrooms. The plans outline renovations to the two existing washrooms with new fixtures and to also renovate the changeroom on the playground side of the building to a universal accessible barrier-free washroom.

There will be a pathway from the sidewalk on Matilda St. to the universal washroom. AAC Members provided the following feedback on the design:

- The existing sidewalk on the north side should be widened with a landing area at the door where the new pathway meets it. There is not enough room on the sidewalk to allow for the automatic door to open for someone in a wheelchair;
- Consider removing and replacing all existing sidewalks leading up to and around the building to ensure they meet AODA standards and are compliant in width and zero threshold;
- Is there an opportunity to include an accessible shower as part of this facility?
- There is a location indicated on the drawings to install an adult change table. If budget does not allow for the change table to be installed this year, this needs to be included in a future budget in order to make this universal washroom an accessible changeroom;

8.3 City of Stratford Washroom List – Deferred to Next Meeting

8.4 Countryside Park Development

Nathan Bottema reported that information on the new Countryside Park, located in the green space next to the Rotary Complex, is now on Engage Stratford for residents to provide preliminary comments. Mr. Bottema encouraged members to participate and to provide feedback. The AAC may also be included as a stakeholder in future discussions regarding the park.

9. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the AAC will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. at the Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

10. Adjournment

Motion by Jen Weber

Seconded by Joan Jones

THAT the October 7, 2025, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Start Time: 12:04 P.M.

End Time: 1:08 P.M.