

Advisory Committee on Accessibility
January 18, 2021
5:00 PM
Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Barry Martin, Chair, Councillor Isa Lee, Robert Hunn, Vice-Chair, Jewell Lofsky, Rita Lam, Nahid Verma, Kaushi Rangunathan, Mona, Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services, Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator

Regrets:
 Laura Meffen, and George George

Item	Discussion	Action
1. Call to Order	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 5:03 PM.	
2. Accessibility and Markham Parks	<p>David Plant, Senior Manager of Parks, Horticulture & Forestry, and Richard Fournier, Manager of Parks and Open Space Development were in attendance to speak about accessibility in parks.</p> <p>David Plant and Richard Fournier asked for the Committee’s feedback on what the City can do to improve the inclusiveness of Markham’s parks, and on how the inclusive features can be communicated to residents. Some of the actions the City is currently undertaking include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New park construction playground safety surfacing is accessible. Looking at criteria to guide replacement playground safety surfacing to increase accessibility. • Consultant to provide the City with direction on how Markham can make its parks more inclusive / accessible for everyone of all abilities; • Ensuring park furniture is accessible, for example the City has now purchasing parks benches with arms on both ends and a centre arm, and adding round accessible picnic tables to be more inclusive; • With every asset replacement project such as splash pad ensuring that some park furniture at that location is accessible; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to residents on how to make parks more accessible, for example the City worked with a local resident to make the Grandview Park more accessible; • Considering accessibility when resurfacing trails and ensuring that limestone trails are in excellent condition; • Working with ITS to promote a platform to communicate inclusive features at Markham parks. <p>Committee provided the following feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt staff were moving in the right direction, as they are listening to the Committee and to residents in regards to how to improve the inclusiveness of Markham’s parks, and they are working on developing an ITS platform to better communicate what Markham is already doing; • Suggested including the size and walkability of the park when listing the inclusive features of a park; • Suggested that understanding the existing inclusive features in Markham parks will help residents recognize what is missing; • Noted that Markham’s parks should be made inclusive for various age groups, and types of disabilities; • Recommended that trails have lots of benches for residents who cannot walk far, and tactile signage and scent gardens for the visually impaired; • Suggesting consulting with caregivers to see what they need in order to bring a disabled person or older adult to the park; • Noted that peddle assistant devices should be permitted on Markham’s pathways (note: Engineering Staff are addressing this matter and are in the process of updating the City’s By-Law in this regard); • Suggested including a compass on park maps to help residents find their way if they are lost; • Suggested maps should be in a topographical or aerial format (Note: 	

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	<p>Markham’s park maps are in a topographical format);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure inclusive information regarding Markham’s parks is available on the website, and that it is presented in a way that is easy read, like putting information in a chart format. <p>David Plant asked the Committee to provide feedback on different municipality accessibility platforms for parks. Links to the different municipalities’ platforms will be emailed out to the members to review. Feedback on these platforms will then be gathered and forwarded to David Plant for submission to ITS as a framework example.</p>	<p>Review the different municipalities accessibility platforms (links to platforms will be sent to the Committee)</p> <p>– All Committee Members</p>
<p>3. Approval of the Minutes</p>	<p>Moved by Robert Hunn Seconded by Nahid Verma</p> <p>That the Minutes of the November 16, 2020 Advisory Committee on Accessibility be approved; and,</p> <p>That the Notes from the December 14, 2020 Advisory Committee on Accessibility meeting be received for information purposes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	
<p>4. Closed Captions at Standing Committee Meetings</p>	<p>Martha Pettit, Deputy Clerk was in attendance to advise the Committee that Standing Committee meeting videos and livestreaming will now include closed captions. The captions will not be perfect at first, as it will take several meetings for the program to learn peoples’ voices and to master commonly used vocabulary. This initiative was launched at today’s General Committee.</p> <p>A sample of the City of Mississauga’s closed captions was displayed to the Committee.</p> <p>Committee suggested that the script should roll so that the readers can understand the greater context of what is being said. It was noted that Markham’s close captions may display the closed captions slightly differently than Mississauga’s.</p>	

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<p>5. Brian Lynch</p>	<p>Barry Martin, Chair advised with great sorrow that Brian Lynch, Member of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility passed away. A resident from the community has reached out to the Committee and asked if the Committee wants to participate in a Zoom memorial, and if they want to make a donation towards an obituary to recognize Brian’s contributions to the community.</p> <p>The Committee was interested in participating in the Zoom Memorial and sharing stories about Brian. A number of options were put forward and are being reviewed in terms of honoring Brian Lynch. .</p> <p>Staff agreed to look into the Committee’s requests and report back when they have more information.</p>	<p>Let resident know the Committee wants to participate in the Zoom memorial – Laura Gold</p> <p>Look into the Committee’s request to use funds from the Accessibility Committee Budget towards the obituary, and about planting a tree in Brian’s honour – Mona Nazif and Laura Gold</p>
<p>6. 2021 Business Plan</p>	<p>Barry Martin, Chair led a discussion on the 2021 Business Plan.</p> <p>Committee agreed to focus on the following items in 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Did you know” educational communication campaign; • The City’s website; • Markham’s parks and trail system. 	
<p>7. Sub-Committee Update</p>	<p>Barry Martin, advised that Sub-Committees will be formed to support the 2021 Business Plan.</p> <p>The following Sub-Committees were formed to work on these initiatives:</p>	

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	<p>Did You Know Sub-Committee Jewell Lofsky Rita Lam Kaushi Ragunathan</p> <p><i>Task</i> – work on advancing the Did you Know Educational Campaign.</p> <p><i>Action</i> – Invite Maxine Roy, Communication & Media Relations Advisor to a future meeting to discuss the “Did you Knows”.</p> <p>Website Sub-Committee Jewell Lofsky Rita Lam Nahid Verma</p> <p><i>Task</i> – Look at the City’s website and see if simple changes can be made to improve accessibility.</p> <p><i>Action</i> – Invite the applicable staff to provide an update on the accessibility updates to the City’s website.</p> <p>Parks and Trail System, and Special Events Sub-Committee</p> <p>Barry Martin Bob Hunn Kaushi Ragunathan George George</p> <p><i>Task</i> – Look at the accessibility of Markham’s parks and trails.</p> <p>Audit Sub-Committee Barry Martin Bob Hunn Kaushi Ragunathan Jewell Lofsky</p> <p><i>Task</i> – The Audit Sub-Committee was tasked with completing the work that it started, for example the Markham Civic Centre Audit, and working with the</p>	<p>Invite Maxine Roy to a future meeting to discuss the “Did you Knows” – Mona Nazif</p> <p>Invite staff to provide an update on the accessibility updates to the City’s website – Mona Nazif</p> <p>Circulate Committee’s contact information so that Sub-Committees can</p>

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	<p>Website Sub-Committee to look at how inclusive Markham's website is.</p> <p>The Sub-Committees can meet between meetings either by teleconference or by Zoom. Sub-Committee reports will be provided at regularly scheduled Advisory Committee on Accessibility meetings. Staff will not attend Sub-Committee meetings.</p> <p>The Clerk was requested to send an email with the Sub-Committee members contact information so that they can organize meetings. Members consented to sharing their personal information.</p> <p>Sub-Committee update was requested to be added as a regular agenda item.</p>	<p>set up meetings – Laura Gold</p> <p>Make Sub-Committee Update a regular agenda item on the agenda – Laura Gold</p>
8. New Business	<p>Mona Nazif, Senior Manager of Human Resources reported that the City is in the process of refreshing its 2010 -2019 Diversity Action Plan, and that the updated plan will focus on all aspects of diversity and inclusion. . Updating the plan is part of Council's strategic objectives. The plan is targeted to be updated prior to the end of the term of Council. Informal updates on the development of the plan can be provided at each meeting.</p> <p>Committee agreed to make the Diversity Action Plan Update a standing agenda item to ensure the Committee's active participation in the process.</p>	<p>Make the Diversity Action Plan Update a standing item on the agenda – Laura Gold</p>
9. Next Meeting Date	<p>The next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility will be held on Feb 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM.</p>	
10. Adjournment	<p>The Advisory Committee on Accessibility Adjourned at 7:04 PM.</p>	