

**Advisory Committee on Accessibility  
Minutes  
Monday, June 21, 2021  
Zoom  
5:00 PM**

**Attendance:**

Councillor Isa Lee  
Nahid Verma, Co-Chair  
Jewell Lofsky  
Kaushi Regunathan  
Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services  
Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator  
Mary-Jane Courchesne, Acting Council/Committee Coordinator

**Regrets:**

Robert Hunn, Co-Chair

**Guests:**

David Plant, Senior Manager, Parks, Horticulture & Forestry, Operations  
Robert Cole, Manager, Applications, Information Technology Services  
Megan Garza, Manager, Organizational Transformation, Markham Public Library

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items
<b>1. Call to Order</b>	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 5:05 PM with Nahid Verma in the Chair.	
<b>2. Parks / Trails / Facilities Update</b>	<p>Mona Nazif, Senior Manager HR Client Services, invited Operations and Information Technology Services (ITS) to provide a progress update on the creation of an accessible product that would permit residents to search the accessibility features of City parks, trails and facilities.</p> <p>David Plant, Senior Manager, Parks, Horticulture &amp; Forestry, Operations explained that he would like to ensure that accessibility product that the City is currently working on is on track with the Committee's request. The Committee will also have an opportunity to provide feedback on the model of the product once it is created.</p> <p>Robert Cole, Manager, Applications, Information Technology Services, indicated that ITS has the capability to add accessibility features, icons and filters to the website portal model and to the mobile app model. Committee's input was requested to create an initial list of</p>	

	<p>priority features so that ITS can start working on the model.</p> <p>The following was discussed relative to the accessible product staff are working on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested residents should be able to search for multi-use pathways and identify where there are accessibility challenges;</li> <li>• Suggested having a menu consisting of a “search by accessibility feature” rather than beginning with a park search if possible;</li> <li>• Suggested that staff look at the City of Toronto’s partially accessible trail maps as a potential model;</li> <li>• Recommended that resident search by community rather than by Ward, as residents may not know what Ward they live in.</li> </ul> <p>Staff advised that ITS could work on both search methods and then Committee can decide which search method works best (models: search by park or search by accessibility feature). For the website, ITS will use GIS technology, which will allow the users to zoom in on park maps to view both that accessible features and any possible obstacles. The mobile app project will involve more work. Colours can be added to the mobile app or website to improve the user’s experience and the accessibility of the product.</p> <p>Mona Nazif emphasized a focus on simplicity to ensure success and indicated that David Plant and Rob Cole will need time to develop the website and the mobile app so that they can come back to Committee with models in the Fall.</p>	
<p><b>3. Meet and Greet - Library Partner for Accessibility Content Changes on Portal</b></p>	<p>Mona Nazif introduced Megan Garza, Manager, Organizational Transformation, Markham Public Library, who has agreed to work on the accessibility content on the City’s website in partnership with the Committee.</p> <p>Ms. Garza explained the following: (i) that the Library has received the Committee’s feedback on the accessibility content on the City’s website; (ii) her role with diversity, equity and inclusion; and (iii) the work she has done on the City’s website and intranet with respect to accessibility.</p>	

	<p>The following was discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Librarians want to reduce barriers and are great researchers;</li> <li>• Library staff have developed a list of accessibility related resources that they would suggest be added to the website;</li> <li>• Committee noted it would like to see all of the content of the “Did You Knows” on the website.</li> </ul> <p>It was suggested that the Committee focus on making small advancements to move the project forward, and that the Co-Chairs meet with Ms. Garza prior to the next meeting to review the document created by Rita Lam and Jewell Lofsky on the accessibility content on the City’s website.</p>	<p><b>Meet with Ms. Garza prior to the next meeting to discuss the document created by the Committee on the accessibility content on the City’s website – Co-Chairs</b></p>
<p><b>4. Approval of the Minutes</b></p>	<p><b>a) Approval of Minutes</b></p> <p>Moved by Jewell Lofsky Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee</p> <p>That the Minutes of the May 17, 2021, Advisory Committee on Accessibility, be approved as presented.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p> <p><b>b) Review of Action Items</b></p> <p>Committee discussed the previous action items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <b>Diversity Action Plan</b> – Mona Nazif advised that no responses have been received to date from Committee, but that staff are working with groups such as the Welcome Centres, United Way and 211 Find Helps to develop the Diversity Plan Stakeholder List. It was noted that the Committee can still submit organizations to add to the list.</li> <li>(ii) <b>Did Your Knows</b> – Mona Nazif advised that the City’s focus has been on promoting the Committee’s vacancies through the</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor Isa Lee will provide Mona with recommendations.</b></p>

	social media campaign. The deadline to receive applications is June 30, 2021. Laura Gold advised that the City has received six applications for the Committee to date.	
<b>5. Diversity Action Plan Update</b>	<p>Mona Nazif provided a Diversity Action Plan Update.</p> <p>The City's awarded vendor will be reaching out to the following groups (i) Accessibility Committee (ii) Seniors Committee (iii) Race Relations Committee (iv) the Mayor's Black Youth Liaison Committee and (v) the Mayor's Youth Council to help create the City's 10 year blueprint for its updated Diversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Nahid Verma stressed the importance of meeting informally over the summer to continue to advance committee projects.</p>	
<b>6. Sub-Committee Reports</b>	<p><u>Did You Know Sub-Committee</u></p> <p>Jewell Lofsky recommended that Committee members continue adding their ideas and notes to the current "Did You Know" working document over the summer so that information is up-to-date.</p> <p>Mona Nazif suggested the next priority for the "Did You Knows" be Parking. Mona to send the three Parking samples.</p> <p>The Markham Accessibility Award will be discussed in the Fall.</p>	<b>Mona to send parking samples.</b>
<b>7. Round Table Discussion</b>	<p>The Committee suggested that going forward members get to know each other better to keep members engaged. It was recommended that new members be asked if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prefer onboarding material to be printed and mailed or circulated by email;</li> <li>• would like to speak to current members in the summer before their first meeting in the fall;</li> <li>• would be interested in an outdoor summer social.</li> </ul> <p>Nahid Verma requested that committee documentation be stored in one location so that it can be easily referenced by members and by the public. It was recommended that key documents be added to the City's Board/Committee Directory under the Advisory Committee on Accessibility.</p>	

<p><b>8. New Business</b></p>	<p><u>New Member Onboarding Plan and Resignations:</u></p> <p>Laura Gold advised Committee that the following members have recently resigned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George George</li> <li>• Rita Lam</li> </ul> <p>Jewell Lofsky recommended that members each take an active role to keep members engaged, and to move projects forward in the hopes that the City becomes a leader in accessibility. The Committee should also start to talk about the City's accessibility standards, specifically for children with disabilities, including schools standards.</p> <p><u>York Region Accessibility Forum Meeting</u></p> <p>Nahid Verma mentioned that there was a lot of useful information provided at the York Region Accessibility Forum Meeting. Other Accessibility Committees from across the Region are also very involved in improving accessibility. Committee members' feedback to City staff is key to improving accessibility throughout the City.</p> <p>Kaushi Ragunathan suggested that the Committee use York Region's general requirements / cross-check list. The list would act as a guide and would be helpful to members when working on all types of accessibility projects.</p> <p>Laura Gold mentioned that the Committee has encouraged City staff to apply an accessibility lens to City projects.</p>	
<p><b>9. Planting a Tree for Brian Lynch</b></p>	<p>The Committee discussed planting a tree in Brian Lynch's memory.</p> <p>Councillor Isa Lee to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) David Plant whether a tree could be dedicated to Brian Lynch as part of one of the City's planned tree planting projects in Ward 1; and</li> <li>(ii) Councillor Keith Irish for input.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Councillor Isa Lee to ask about dedicating a tree or other park feature to honour Brian Lynch.</b></p>

<b>10. Next Meeting Date</b>	<p>The next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility will be held on September 20, 2021.</p> <p>Note: after the meeting, the date of the next meeting was changed to September 27, 2021.</p>	
<b>11. Adjournment</b>	<p>The Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned at 7:06 PM.</p>	