

**Advisory Committee on Accessibility  
Minutes**

**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2022  
**Time:** 5:00pm  
**Location:** Zoom  
**Interim Chair:** Michelle Del Carmen

**Members present:**

Michelle Del Carmen (Interim Chair)  
 Kim Adeney  
 Dasola Dina  
 Babak Esmaeilzadeh-faal  
 Edward Lau  
 Jewell Lofsky  
 Lee Perry

**Regrets:**

Elham Mahootchi  
 Kaushi Ragunathan  
 Councillor Isa Lee

**Staff:**

Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources  
 Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Secretary (PT)

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION
<p><b>1. Call to Order</b></p>	<p>The Advisory Committee on Accessibility convened at 5:02 PM with Michelle del Carmen serving as Interim Chair. The City's Indigenous Land Acknowledgement was read.</p>	
<p><b>2. Approval of Advisory Committee on Accessibility Minutes &amp; Review of Action Items</b></p>	<p><b>Moved by:</b> Jewell Lofsky  <b>Seconded by:</b> Lee Perry  <b>That the Minutes of the June 20, 2022, Advisory Committee on Accessibility, be approved as presented.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p> <p><b>Review of Action Items:</b>                      Janet Ashfield provided updates on the following matters:</p> <p><u>Civic Centre Audit</u>                      The City of Markham has hired a consultant to review outstanding items relating to the Council Chambers, Entrances and Chapel. The Committee asked that, prior to the consultant being hired, it be able to review materials intended to be provided to the consultant. The Committee also requested the opportunity to tour the Chapel and entrances in order to provide feedback. It does not appear that changes are being made to the Council Chambers to address the lack of alternatives to the stairs for those with mobility issues.</p>	<p>The Committee would like to provide feedback and input.</p>

	<p><u>Terms of Reference</u> Kim Adeney outlined the processes that are required to implement revised Terms of Reference. Jewell Lofsky recommended that the Committee review the work of former Committee members as the Terms of Reference have been updated three times over the years.</p> <p><u>Mayor's Awards</u> These awards will not take place this year due to the election being held in October. The Committee discussed how best to present the Accessibility Awards; ideas included giving the awards during Accessibility Week, and sending a letter and certificate signed by the Chair and Mayor.</p> <p><u>Contact Centre Updates</u> A change-over of systems in the Contact Centre took place on September 19<sup>th</sup>. It is hoped that this will address many of the issues experienced in reaching the Contact Centre and in getting a response.</p>	<p>Edward Lau and Michelle del Carmen agreed to meet off line to discuss possible options.</p> <p>The Committee asked that the City consider putting the Contact Centre phone number on the home page of the City website to make the phone number easy for people to find.</p>
<p><b>3. Resignation of Chair, Advisory Committee on Accessibility - Appointment of Interim Chair</b></p>	<p>Michelle del Carmen reported that, when Nahid Verma resigned as Chair during the summer, she asked Michelle to serve as Interim Chair. Committee discussion focussed on whether this was an appropriate action to take, the need for a Vice Chair position, and the hopes for the appointment of a permanent staff liaison who would have knowledge of Council and City processes, as well as Accessibility matters and issues.</p> <p>Michelle del Carmen and Edward Lau advised they would consider serving as Interim Chair and Interim Vice Chair respectively, and provided information as to why the work of the Committee is important to them.</p> <p><b>Moved by: Edward Lau</b></p>	

	<p><b>Seconded by: Lee Perry</b>  <b>That Michelle del Carmen be confirmed as Interim Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility until December 31, 2022.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p> <p><b>Moved by: Jewell Lofsky</b>  <b>Seconded by: Lee Perry</b>  <b>That Edward Lau be confirmed as Interim Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility until December 31, 2022.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried</b></p>	
<p><b>4. Subcommittee Membership</b></p>	<p>Committee members discussed the recruitment and interview process and felt they should be more transparent and have Committee involvement e.g., to share expectations with potential new members. Committee members were reminded that appointments are typically made by Council for the Committee.</p> <p>Michelle del Carmen advised the new members that the Committee would like to sort out the purpose of the subcommittees over the next few months, and then help the new members determine which committee they would like to join, according to their expertise.</p>	<p>The Committee Secretary will request an updated membership list from the Clerk’s Office, and invite Laura Gold to attend the next meeting to speak about the recruitment and interview process.</p>
<p><b>5. Terms of Reference</b></p>	<p>Kim Adeney reported that she had volunteered to update the Terms of Reference, even though it is usually a staff-driven process. Terms of Reference are approved by Council; a new council will soon be elected so, the earliest that revised Terms of Reference could be approved would be in early 2023. It would be expected that the permanent staff member assigned to the Committee would drive the process forward.</p> <p>Janet Ashfield advised that there is a defined process; the Committee can review the draft Terms of Reference and highlight desired changes, and she can help shepherd the document through required steps. The final draft will need to be reviewed by the Legal department and Clerks Office, to ensure that it's consistent with Terms of Reference for other committees. Then this</p>	<p>Kim Adeney will provide an update to the Committee at the October meeting.</p>

	<p>committee will need to pass a resolution approving the Revised Terms of Reference and requesting Council to endorse it.</p> <p>Committee members mentioned that representation on the Committee should be reviewed. The composition according to law is that the majority of members of an accessibility advisory committee must be people with disabilities.</p> <p>In response to Committee questions whether Markham has appointed the Chair of the Committee as Markham's representative on the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, it was noted that York Region tries to ensure that there are people from each of the nine local municipalities, including the city of Markham. So, there is a City of Markham member on the Committee, but Markham is not able to request that someone be appointed.</p>	
<p><b>6. Subcommittees Plan Updates</b></p>	<p><b><u>Audit Subcommittee:</u></b> Dasola Dina reported that the Audit Subcommittee is planning to move ahead in November with the audit of the Thornhill Community Center Library and Seniors Center.</p> <p>Dasola also provided an update on the Unionville BIA initiative to make Main Street accessible not only during summer events, but all year round. Dasola reported that she was able to see that there were some ramps in place, reflective of the feedback given during the June meeting and that the work, that the Committee is doing, is having an impact.</p> <p><b><u>Community Outreach Subcommittee:</u></b> Edward Lau asked whether Markham would observe the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, to be observed on December 4<sup>th</sup> this year; it was noted that this may conflict with the date of the swearing in of the new Council.</p>	<p>Dasola will reach out to Niina Felushko, Chair Main St. BIA, to congratulate her on moving forward with accessibility plans, and advise her that the Committee is still very interested in supporting the BIA accessibility initiatives and providing assistance, if needed.</p> <p>Janet Ashfield will enquire whether Markham will observe the event.</p>

	<p>Edward Lau advised that the Committee should consider whether members have the capacity to undertake two events. The Committee is committed to celebrate National AccessAbility Week, and it might be preferable to pick only one event to focus on. Budget considerations may also dictate whether the Committee is able to present more than one event; it was noted that there needs to be justification for expenses. However, the Committee is able to request that the City proclaim the event.</p> <p>Edward Lau and Dasola Dina left the meeting at 6:35 pm.</p> <p><b><u>Social Media &amp; Communications Subcommittee:</u></b> No report was available.</p> <p><b><u>Invisible Disabilities Subcommittee:</u></b> No report was available. However, the Committee discussed the reason for the creation of the subcommittee: to not segregate others but to ensure that the voices of those with “invisible” disabilities are heard, because within the disability umbrella, there is that social inequality where 98% of the time, the term “disability” referred to a visible physical disability.</p>	<p>The Outreach Subcommittee will consider how best to proceed with possible events for December, March/April, and June, and bring a recommendation to the Committee.</p>
<p><b>7. New Business</b></p>	<p>The City of Markham is creating Instagram videos to encourage residents to vote in the upcoming election. They already have people who speak a number of foreign languages, and they would like someone from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility who speaks English to participate in a video on why voting is important to them. It is hoped that someone would be available on September 26<sup>th</sup>, for the filming outside of the Civic Center or downtown Markham. Lee Perry and Babak Esmailzadeh-faal volunteered.</p> <p>Committee members questioned the type of training new members of Council and a new Council receive about accessibility legislation and issues, to ensure they have that lens on their work.</p> <p>Committee members discussed whether future meetings should be via Zoom or in person.</p>	<p>Janet Ashfield will advise about training for new Council members.</p>

		Michelle del Carmen will send a poll to Committee members asking them whether the Committee should meet via Zoom or in person.
<b>8. Adjournment</b>	The Advisory Committee on Accessibility adjourned at 6:50 PM.	
<b>Next Meeting Date</b>	The next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility will be held on <b>October 17, 2022.</b>	