
ATTENDING

- Chair, Councillor Jennifer Ingham
- Vice Chair, Dwayne MacLeod
- Mayor Wendy Donovan
- Rebecca Smith
- Pamela Capern
- Birgit Elssner

ALSO ATTENDING:

- Meghan Swanburg, Acadia University
- Director of Finance, Mike MacLean
- Director of Parks and Recreation, Kelton Thomason
- Coordinator of Special Projects & Communication, Barb Shaw
- Recorder, Laura Morrison

REGRETS:

- Emily Duffett

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair, Dwayne MacLeod, called the meeting to order at 4:30pm.

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.

CARRIED

2. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE MINUTES FOR THE March 14, 2022, ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

3. Comments from the Chair

As everyone is virtual in this meeting, anyone wishing to make a comment should use the raise hand function. Online chat has been disabled as it can be difficult to monitor.

4. Public Input/Question Period

No public members in attendance.

5. Staff Reports for Discussion:

- Director MacLean presented on the pre-circulated Draft Accessibility Plan, highlighting some areas for further

a. RFD 027-2022
Accessibility Plan 2022-
2026

discussion. The report is still in draft as there may be some final editing required.

- There is nothing to preclude changing the plan to a four-year plan which is symmetrical with our operational plan and takes us to 2030 provincial climate target.
- Report cards for year ending March 31, 2022 are not yet reviewed, but once approved will go into document. These will be circulated for review before next meeting of this committee.
- Committee agreed it made sense to remove the timeframe for top priorities as these top priorities can take multiple years to complete. Do not want to hold off doing other priorities which could be completed more quickly and easily. The Report card shows each year how things are progressing.
- Added wording for the aspirational goal for universal design to set the bar higher than the previous equity-based goal.
- Staff spent time talking about the design of the final plan. Barb Shaw, Communications Specialist has selected some pictures to be included, but it is the graphic designer's role to create the final layout. Committee and staff should not get too involved in that process. Agreed would like the report to be easy on the eye and easy to understand not too complicated. Graphic design expert has experience in seeing through an accessibility lens.
- Front page will have different colour background to differentiate from previous versions.
- Financial Implications – how this affects the Town's budget is important to Council's role. In terms of the capital plan for Town Hall and Library some of the accessibility concerns will be addressed through that process which now has a combined cost of around \$5.6m. Although due to COVID and inflation this may rise.
- Barb advised if the Mayor or Chair would like support or assistance in the wording of their opening remarks in the document they can reach out. There will be two separate messages, one from the Mayor and one from the Chair.
- Universal Design/Barrier Free visual – text formatting will change to be in italics. Concern there is no diversity in terms of skin colour and gender in the visual, which will be addressed.
- Glossary of Terms – even though the document will be in plain language, it was agreed a glossary may still be useful.
- Gallery of Achievements – once visuals are chosen, we will work with the Graphic Designer as to where these will be located in the document i.e., all on one page or incorporated into each section.

- Before and after pictures – will look to see if we have any from past projects and for new projects will try to make a concerted effort take photos going forward.
- Concern over the term ‘Granny Flats’ as well as the clarity around these being an aspirational goal. This project is a significant planning issue in at least one zone. Add in allowable zones and Council and PAC will be looking at the issue if not allowed in R1. Will work with plain language editor to review the term. Accessory Unit is the accepted term as does not identify with a particular cultural or age.
- Staff positions: we don’t currently have building structures that fully accommodate barrier free, but suggestion we could start identifying positions within the Town that could work remotely full-time within next 4 years.
- Create directory, or a link available to the community of interpreters and other resources they can access.
- Transportation discussion: Although the Town regulates taxis – the demand for accessible cabs may result in them not serving the area at all. If HRM are struggling with it as has been suggested, it would be much harder for the Town to achieve it and may end up pushing the current providers out. It was agreed that taxis should be kept in the report to show an awareness of the lack of accessible taxis, and it is something we can aim for. Acadia submitted their accessibility plan to the province and one of their deliverables is collaborating with the Town to work on accessible transportation so makes sense to keep it in.
- Some of the focus areas overlap; this section deals with vehicular transport. In built environment it could be improved sidewalks - different definition.
- Currently the Town is undergoing a micro transit review as is Kings Transport Authority which will work together.
- An accessibility email address will be created and available on the Town’s website for the community to use, which will be received directly by the Accessibility Coordinator.
- Biographies of members of the committees – agreement reached to have joint picture and a small blurb acknowledging the members, but no full bios or full-on headshots.
- Council and staff are currently looking at a virtual meeting policy with a move toward hybrid meetings. Beyond functioning in a COVID world, we could aim to look at this further with an accessibility lens within next four years. Enabling access to some parts of the community who may currently not have the option to participate due to physical barriers. It is something to strive for as it may not be fully

possible, but like the idea. Flexibility in use, may be helpful if someone has a sick child at home for example. Council & staff currently working on, could be something additional to strive for in the future.

- The committee is happy with the report, members felt it was a solid plan that read well, understanding it is a fluid document.
- Director MacLean advised next steps in the process. If this committee is happy to recommend the plan to Council for approval; Council can accept it as is or accept it with changes they wish to make as is their prerogative.

BY MOTION, BIRGIT ELSSNER MOVED THAT THE ATTACHED DRAFT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2022-2026, AS AMENDED, BE FORWARDED TO COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL AND ADOPTION BY THE TOWN, SECONDED BY PAMELA CAPERN.

CARRIED.

6. Next Meeting

May 9, 2022

7. Adjournment

Members called an adjournment at 5:31 pm.

**Approved at the June 13, 2022 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting.
As recorded by Laura Morrison, Executive Assistant & Town Clerk, Office of the CAO.**