



Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

March 2022

1. Goal

- 1.1 To provide advice to Regional Council on the preparation, implementation and review of its annual accessibility plan and other accessibility related issues within the Region.

2. Mandate

- 2.1 The Durham Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is a volunteer Advisory Committee established by Regional Council in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA 2001) and these Terms of Reference.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference provide for the AAC to advise and assist the Region in the development of an annual accessibility plan(s) and an allowance for the AAC to be proactive and advise on matters identified on its own initiative, provided it satisfies the requirements under the ODA 2001.
- 2.3 Issues and concerns (barriers) faced by persons with disabilities may be referred to the AAC from Regional Council. The AAC will report to Regional Council through the Finance and Administration Committee, under the purview of the Chief Administrative Officer, on substantive matters as determined by the requirements of the ODA 2001, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

3. Scope of activities

- 3.1 The scope of the AAC will include the following activities:
 - a) participating in the annual development of the Region's Accessibility Plan(s) which is intended to improve the quality of life for all Regional citizens, including persons with disabilities;
 - b) advising the Region on the implementation and effectiveness of its annual Accessibility Plan(s) to ensure that it addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the Regional by-laws, and all its policies, programs, practices and services;
 - c) selecting and reviewing in a timely manner the site plans and drawings for new development, described in section 41 of *The Planning Act*;

- d) reviewing and monitoring existing and proposed procurement policies of the Region for the purpose of providing advice with respect to the accessibility for persons with disabilities to the goods or services being procured; and
- e) reviewing access for persons with disabilities to buildings, structures and premises (or parts thereof) that the Region purchases, constructs, significantly renovates, leases or funds.

4. Composition

- 4.1 The AAC will comprise up to eleven voting members in total. The majority of members shall be persons with a disability as defined by the ODA 2001. An eleven person committee may typically be comprised as follows:
 - a) Six members shall be persons with disabilities. These Committee members shall be representative of gender, ethnicity and different types of visible and invisible disabilities noted in the ODA 2001;
 - b) Five members shall be persons who may not have a disability. These members shall be comprised of:
 - one member of Regional Council,
 - two citizen members of which one member shall be a family member of a disabled person, and
 - two members who are professionals from the stakeholder community.
- 4.2 Membership shall be a 4-year term corresponding with the term of Regional Council. However, citizen members shall continue to serve until their replacements are appointed by Regional Council. If a member chooses to resign, the Region will seek a replacement in accordance with Section 5.
- 4.3 At the discretion of the AAC, non-attendance at three consecutive meetings will be sufficient grounds for replacement.
- 4.4 The AAC shall strive to maintain a high level of relevant technical expertise and competence in disability issues within its membership.
- 4.5 The AAC may establish Project Teams and/or Working Groups as deemed necessary to address specific issues; noting that secretariat services will not be provided to these teams/groups. These Project Teams/Working Groups shall draw upon members from the AAC as well as staff support/outside resources as deemed necessary. The Chair of a project team/working group shall be a voting member of the AAC.

5. Membership selection

- 5.1 Durham Region will place an advertisement seeking individuals interested in volunteering for appointment to the AAC. Interested individuals will be required to submit an application form to the Regional Clerk outlining their interest and qualifications.
- 5.2 The CAO's office shall contact appropriate agencies and community organizations and invite individuals to volunteer for the AAC. Interested individuals will be required to submit an application form to the Regional Clerk and provide a brief resume outlining their interest and qualifications.
- 5.3 The CAO's office will review the applications received and recommend individuals for appointment to the AAC. Members shall be chosen for their special expertise, experience, dedication and commitment to the mandate of the Committee.
- 5.4 All members of the AAC shall be appointed by the Finance and Administration Committee and Regional Council.
- 5.5 Regional Council shall appoint a representative to the AAC from the members of the Finance and Administration Committee.
- 5.6 In the case of a vacancy, the approach described in Section 5 will generally be followed.

6. Officers

- 6.1 A chair and a vice-chair will be elected annually by the membership of the AAC. The Corporate Services – Legislative Services Division representative will chair the inaugural AAC meeting for the voting process.

7. Support services

- 7.1 The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designate shall serve as staff liaison to the AAC. The staff liaison will provide administrative, procedural and technical support to the AAC and will utilize the staff support group noted in Section 7.2 as deemed necessary.
- 7.2 A staff support group will be provided as required by the AAC. The initial support group shall be comprised of the following, noting that the lead is a member of the CAO's office; Legislative Services, Finance, Corporate Services - Human Resources and Information Technology, Works, Planning & Economic Development, Legal, Social Services, Police, Durham Emergency Management, and Corporate Communications Departments.

7.3 The staff liaison will co-ordinate all requests for advice from the AAC, through meeting agendas. AAC responses to such requests shall be co-ordinated by the staff liaison through the Finance and Administration Committee to Regional Council.

7.4 The Region will provide secretarial and other support services. Regional Council will provide a budget to cover the operational expenses of the AAC and this budget will be administered by the CAO's office.

8. Meetings

8.1 The AAC will meet six times per year (January, March, May, June, September and November) in a designated Regional meeting room. The AAC will establish a meeting schedule at its inaugural meeting, taking into account the business needs and the schedule of Regional Committees/Council. Special meetings may be held at the call of the Chair.

8.2 Quorum for AAC meetings shall be a majority of the sitting AAC members.

8.3 All meetings will be open to the public. As a formal Advisory Committee to the Region, the AAC is subject to the Regional Procedural By-law, unless otherwise specified in the Terms of Reference.

9. Delegations at committee meetings

9.1 Any person(s) wishing to appear before the AAC as a delegate must submit a request to the staff liaison in the CAO's office, advising of the topic or item to which they wish to speak. All requests for delegations must be received at least one week prior to the meeting to ensure that the delegation is included in the agenda. Any person wishing to address the AAC as a delegate, who has not previously arranged to do so, may be granted permission to do so only by Committee resolution.

10. Minutes and agenda

10.1 The minutes of each AAC meeting will be amended as necessary and approved at the following meeting. The unapproved minutes will be circulated to members of Council as part of the Council Information Package prepared by the Regional Clerk.

10.2 The AAC agendas will be prepared by the staff liaison and/or the Legislative Services Division, with input from the AAC chair or vice-chair, and other AAC members. Agendas will be distributed the week prior to upcoming meetings.

11. Committee resolutions

- 11.1 The AAC will seek to achieve consensus on decisions. Recommendations are 'carried' if supported by a majority unless otherwise specified in these Terms of Reference or Regional Council Rules of Procedure. Only resolutions as they appear in the adopted Minutes may be considered as officially representing the position of the AAC.

12. Annual reports and workplan

- 12.1 An annual workplan with an estimate of the resources necessary and any suggested revisions to the Terms of Reference for the coming year shall also be prepared by the AAC for consideration and approval by the Finance and Administration Committee and Regional Council. To avoid duplication, the AAC shall ensure that the workplan is co-ordinated with other disability initiatives in the Region.
- 12.2 An annual review of the AAC by the Chief Administrative Officer, on behalf of Regional Council, will be completed to examine the effectiveness of the Committee and to ensure continued improvements.