

Accessibility Working Group Minutes
October 7, 2019

1. Welcome and roll call

AWG Members: Linda Bartram, Robin Bayley, Susan Gallagher, Chris Dobbie, Steve Bertrand, Chris Marks, Regrets – Paul Jones

Council Liaisons: Sarah Potts, Jeremy Loveday

Staff: Fraser Work (Director of Engineering and Public Works), Kelly-Anne Malcomson, admin support

Guests – Keith and Mary (ASL interpreters)

2. Approval of agenda

Amended agenda adopted – moved by Linda, seconded by Chris M., carried

3. Approval of September 16, 2019 Minutes

Moved by Linda, seconded by Susan, carried

4. Business arising:

- a) The following motions regarding sidewalk patios were passed by an email vote:

Motion: AWG recommends that Council direct staff to Enforce City bylaws on sidewalk cafes and portable signs (sandwich boards), to remove barriers to safe sidewalk use by pedestrians with disabilities.

(Note: For clarity, this means moving from a complaints-based model of enforcement to a proactive model of identifying hazards and instances of non-compliance, and taking enforcement actions, and may include a targeted information component).

Refer this matter to the accessibility Framework.

Motion: AWG recommends that Council direct staff to consider the implications of the City regulating businesses, which are granted the privilege of using the public domain for sidewalk cafes/patios, to be required to provide accessible access to the cafe/patio, and accessible seating.

(Note: By accessible seating is meant, someone in a wheelchair can navigate to a table and the table will be at an appropriate height); and

Refer this matter to the Accessibility Framework and direct staff to work with the AWG or its successor advisory committee to identify and evaluate potential solutions to these identified barriers

b) Accessibility Framework

Fraser Work explained that the main body of the Framework (the section that had been provided to AWG to date) would live on as a high level commitment and each year the City would update a set of action items (Action Plan) which would list actions for 0 – 1 year, 1 - 3 years and beyond. The Action Plan is being reviewed by departmental Directors at present. The goal is to get the Action Plan to AWG before the second joint workshop and COTW on Nov. 7. The Prioritization Tool will identify the scale of benefits for infrastructure projects. There is provision for at least one full-time equivalent to coordinate accessibility elements for the City. Robin has shared resources regarding such a position with the consultants.

The Framework sets the tone, giving the City the direction, guidelines, principles and approaches as to how it does accessibility. The Accessibility Program will include the Appendices – Action Plan, Prioritization Tool, Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee, Accessibility Policy.

Council can adopt all or just some of the documents recommending that some go back for more engagement. AWG will carry on until the total package is adopted by Council so the transition to the new advisory committee is as seamless as possible.

AWG identified that the Framework needs to include or refer to guidelines (accessibility lens) which assists staff to analyze accessibility considerations in a comprehensive way before writing the Accessibility Impact Statement in staff reports. Robin has provided such a document to staff in the past.

Action: Robin will resend AIS guideline document to Fraser and he will reconsider where it fits (possibly as an appendix)

It was noted that the free youth bus pass program will also apply to youth who use HandyDart but this was not noted in the AIS. The AIS can be used to report not only what and how accessibility barriers will be addressed but also those which have already been addressed (successes).

In the Focus Areas section, AWG would like to see gaps identified in the same detail as actions taken and underway. Fraser indicated that these will be mentioned in the Action Plan and acknowledged that there was a bit of a disparity in the draft provided to AWG. Fraser stated that the "Our Commitment" section was based on the Statement of Commitment adopted by Council but as staff did not get an opportunity to comment on the statement, they were doing so in the Framework.

AWG identified that the Framework should refer to both removing and preventing barriers as do other such documents (e.g. BC Framework for Accessibility Legislation).

AWG would also like to see a comparison (matrix) of all AWG's recommendations and actions taken to date. Staff are asked not to paraphrase our recommendations but to list them as recommended by AWG or passed by Council in the cases where wording was changed.

Action: Linda will send to Fraser, the AWG edits of the draft Framework provided to date later in the week to be discussed in detail at the first joint meeting scheduled for October 16.

There was discussion regarding scheduling the second joint meeting so staff could present a complete report but it became apparent that

there was not enough time to do this before COTW on November 7 when staff have been asked to present. The alternative is for staff to present an interim report with budget implications on November 7 and come back later with the complete report on all aspects of the Framework. If the budget is what is putting the pressure on meeting jointly a second time, then AWG identified that the Action Plan would be the most important document to get to AWG as soon as possible.

Action: Fraser will send a couple of scheduling options for AWG to consider later this week.

Jeremy commented that he and Councilor Potts had attended the Accessibility training earlier that day and stated that it was very valuable to have received the training prior to consideration of the Framework.

The training did not include balancing different rights and interests, and this was not included in the draft Framework.

Action: Fraser will look out the Ontario guidance document on balancing different rights and interests.

Staff then left the meeting and the AWG members met in-camera.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.