

**MINUTES OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on Wednesday February 28, 2024, Via Zoom

Members Present: Councillor M. Albano, Chair, Councillor D. Keene, J. Bray, L. McKenzie, W. Farrow-Reed, S. Calvert

Regrets: J. Pearce

Staff Present: A. Matthews, Director of Facilities J. Smith, Facility Supervisor, T. Forbes, Facility Supervisor, M. Roj, Traffic Coordinator, R. Brown, Deputy Clerk - Administration

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor M. Albano, Chair called the meeting to order.
Committee and staff briefly introduced themselves.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary or conflict of interest.

3. SCHEDULED ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3.a Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting held on November 22, 2023.

Recommendation No. HHAAC-2024-0001

THAT the Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting held on November 22, 2023, be received.

CARRIED

4. ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MEETING

4.a Update on Accessible Stairs for Acton Pool

T. Forbes advised the committee that the accessible stairs have been well received and are being utilized daily for all sorts of programming including Aquafit. The stairs can be easily removed when the area they are situated in is required for lane swims.

4.b Funding Request - Accessible Push Buttons for Accessible Washrooms at the Gellert

T. Forbes noted that at the November meeting it was brought to staff's attention that there were no push buttons on the accessible washrooms located in the public area and the pool deck of the Gellert Community Centre. The facility is now 20 years old, although built in accordance to building code at the time the two standalone accessible all gender washrooms were not equipped with automatic openers. Staff support the request by the committee and are requesting funding to rectify this situation. For provision and installation of two (2) power operated door openers, the cost will be \$8023.96 plus tax. This cost does not include electrical, staff will have the electrical funded from the operating budget.

Recommendation No. HHAAC-2024-0002

THAT the Accessibility Advisory committee approves funding for two (2) power operated door openers at the Gellert Community Centre in the amount of \$8023.96 (+HST) to be taken from the Municipal Accessibility Plan Capital Project Account.

CARRIED

4.c Update - Accessibility at the Cultural Centre

A. Matthews and J. Smith provide the Accessibility Committee with information regarding audience accommodation at the John Elliott Theatre, particularly concerning sold-out events and general seating availability. The presentation highlighted the ongoing efforts and procedures in place to ensure accessibility for patrons with special needs during events at the theatre.

The theatre offers both General Admission and Reserved Seating configurations for events, with event organizers having the autonomy to choose the seating arrangement. The Front of House Manager is on-site to oversee ushers and assist patrons with special needs and other issues that arise. Volunteer ushers are often provided by the organization running the event, and while they receive an orientation, they may not have extensive experience dealing with patron special requests. The John

Elliott Theatre has 6 positions where seats can be removed to accommodate the placement of a wheelchair. Because the theatre layout uses stairs to access the individual rows, the positions are in the front row (Row A, 2 locations) and the back row (Row N, 4 locations).

Efforts are made to accommodate patrons with diverse needs if seating is available. The theatre is not obligated to prevent seats from being sold to patrons without special needs to reserve seats for potential patrons with special needs. Since all ticket sales are conducted on a first-come, first-served basis, it is a possibility for a patron to not be able to be accommodated based on availability.

The theatre is equipped with a hearing assistive loop system to accommodate patrons using hearing assistive devices. The hearing assistive loop system allows patrons with compatible devices to receive audio signals directly to their hearing aids or cochlear implants, enhancing their listening experience during performances and events.

The Town has long been aware of the preference to install sliding doors at the main entrance of the facility. This was not included in the original plan due to cost constraints at the time. In 2024, the Town has approved a capital expenditure to retrofit the front entrance with sliding doors. The work is anticipated to take place in the third quarter of this year.

The theatre is committed to providing a welcoming and accessible environment for all patrons, including those with special needs. Measures are in place to address accessibility challenges during events, such as sold-out performances with General Admission seating, while adhering to fire code regulations. The facility has ample Accessible Washrooms that can be accessed by elevator. The elevator and link hallway provide access the accessible seats in the front row.

J. Smith advised the committee that staff recently had a situation where accommodation did not occur for a patron on the autism spectrum, this resulted in a complaint that staff have taken seriously and have been addressing. The complaint arose out of a sold-out general admission event with a waitlist. Staff have looked into the situation and noted that due to the general admission and the multiple stakeholders running the event the accommodation was not done. Staff are addressing the matter with the complainant and are looking at their practices and procedures to see if they can try to better accommodate in the future.

The committee expressed disappointment that this situation occurred and requested that staff review their policies, practices, and procedures for future accommodation requests. Staff will report back to the committee on their review and any actions they may be taking in the future.

4.d AODA Improvements for Signalized Intersections 2024

M. Roj made a presentation to the Accessibility Advisory Committee 2024 AODA Improvements for Signalized Intersections.

M. Roj noted that it has been an 18-year journey to where we are in terms of AODA Improvements for Signalized Intersections. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA) 2005 came into effect and with that the first Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) installation at Guelph Street (Hwy 7) and Mountainview Road in 2006. In f December 2012 the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, added new design standards for the Design of Public Spaces that apply to new construction and the redevelopment of elements in public spaces. New or redeveloped pedestrian crossings with curb ramps or depressed curbs must have tactile walking surface indicators with “raised tactile profiles” that have a high tonal contrast to the adjacent surface. The Town of Halton Hills as part of its commitment to AODA has committed to installing or updating three (3) Signalized Intersections per Year

M. Roj reviewed Accessible Pedestrian Signals, Tactile Walking Surface Indicators, Sidewalk Platforms, and other Pedestrian Safety Improvements with the committee, explaining the requirements and what the Town has done to meet those requirements.

M. Roj advised that the Town has 3 signalized intersection projects for 2024 they include;

- Main Street North (Hwy 7) and Moore Park
- Guelph Street (Hwy 7) and Mountainview Road - addition of tactile plates
- Main Street and Mill Street in Acton

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.