

Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Accessibility

Advisory Committee

2023 Terms of Reference



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1.0 Preamble

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005. The AODA mandates that the Council of every municipality having a population of not less than 10,000 shall establish a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) or continue any such committee that was established before the day this section of the AODA came into force.

The contents of this Terms of Reference may be modified upon annual review by the Committee and upon the approval of the Council of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The Terms of Reference should be reviewed at least once each term of Committee, in preparation for the next term's Committee.

2.0 Definitions

Within this Terms of Reference the term:

“Accessibility” refers to:

How easily a product, service, environment or facility can be used by all people, within the widest range of abilities.

“Barrier” means:

Anything that prevents a person from fully participating in all aspects of society, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice (“obstacle”);

“Municipal departments” refers to:

The various departments of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, including Police and Fire Services. It is intended that the Accessibility Advisory Committee shall advise comprehensively upon issues for a barrier-free Chatham-Kent which may entail forwarding recommendations to all departments.

3.0 Mandate

The AAC is a working committee of Chatham-Kent Council; shall advise and assist “Municipal Departments” in promoting and facilitating a barrier-free Chatham-Kent for citizens of all abilities (universal accessibility). This aim shall be achieved through the review of municipal policies, programs and services and the identification, removal and prevention of barriers.

4.0 Composition of Committee

The Composition of the AAC should fall within the guidelines of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA).

Committee membership consists of a maximum of 19 representatives. 50% of the current members must be present to make a quorum.

Members:

A majority of the members should be persons who would generally encounter barriers. These Committee members should be representative of different types of visible and invisible restrictions in ability.

The committee membership should include:

- At least one member (parent) representing children who may encounter barriers
- Members at large, interested in issues related to a barrier-free municipality
- Representation from the various agencies providing assistance to citizens who may encounter barriers
- Representation from the various communities that make up Chatham-Kent (i.e. demographics, geography, etc.)
- At least one member of Chatham-Kent Council

5.0 Membership Term and Eligibility

The ACC term follows the 4-year Term of Council. People interested in being a member of the ACC must apply to the Municipal Clerk's Office before the Municipal election. after each Municipal election. Vacancies throughout the term of the AAC may be filled by submitting a Report to Council with recommendations of new members.

Members are chosen and appointed by Council for their special expertise, experience, dedication and commitment to the mandate of the Committee in promoting and facilitating a barrier-free Chatham-Kent to persons of all abilities.

Other representatives from local organizations shall be members or employees of the organization they represent.

At the first meeting of a four-year term, the Committee shall elect one of its members as the chairperson and another as the vice-chairperson.

At the discretion of the chair, a "notice of motion" can be made informing committee members that a vote will be taking place on a specific issue, at the next scheduled meeting. Voting members who will not be available to attend, may forward their voting preference to the Chair prior to the actual meeting.

Each member of the Committee is an independent representative to the Committee and does not represent the concerns of only one group. The members of this Committee shall work together for the purpose of developing a common approach which is reasonable and practical.

Associate (non-voting) members may be invited to participate periodically. While Associate members may participate in conversations, only designated ACC members hold voting rights. Committee Chair should confirm voting members at the beginning of each meeting.

The AAC may form sub-committees and working groups as may be necessary to address specific issues. These sub-committees and working groups shall draw upon members from the AAC as well as outside resource members as deemed necessary.

Other Organizational Representation:

The Committee currently or from time to time includes representation and consultation from the following organizations which work with people who may display various ranges of abilities or may encounter barriers:

- Alzheimer's Society
- Brain Injury Association – Chatham-Kent
- Canadian Diabetes Society
- Canadian Hearing Society
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Chatham-Kent Parkinson Support Group
- Children's Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent
- Community Health Services Red Cross
- Community Living Chatham-Kent
- Community Living Wallaceburg
- Essex-Kent Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent
- Multiple Sclerosis Society Chatham-Kent
- Ontario March of Dimes

Other community organizations whose mandates or mission align with the work of the AAC may express an interest or be invited to participate or consult with the Committee, as well.

Members of the Committee shall serve without remuneration.

To ensure an inclusive Committee, the Municipal Council shall consider the following:

- Application forms shall be available in alternative formats upon request to Financial Services
- Vacancies shall be publicly advertised and all applications must be considered
- Methods of advertising Committee vacancies shall be tailored to the specific needs of this Committee – for example, in addition to local newspaper advertisements, targeted advertising will take place through publications and/or local agency web-sites, as well as through the use of alternative formats, which serve the local community

6.0 Role of Committee Members and Meeting Procedure

The AAC, a working committee, shall report to Municipal Council, through Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries, Infrastructure and Engineering Services Department. The AAC shall be responsible for the following:

- a) Participating in the annual development and/or refinement of “Municipal Departments” Accessibility Report(s) which are intended to improve the quality of life for all Chatham-Kent citizens.
- b) Advising “Municipal Departments” on the implementation and effectiveness of the Municipality’s annual Accessibility Report to ensure that it addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in “*Municipal Departments*” bylaws, and all its policies, programs, practices and services.
- c) Monitoring the Municipality’s compliance with the Ontario Accessibility Standards required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) legislation.
- d) Selecting and reviewing in a timely manner the site plans and drawings for new development, described in section 41 of *The Planning Act*.
- e) Reviewing and monitoring existing and proposed procurement policies of “Municipal Departments” for the purpose of providing advice with respect to the accessibility for Chatham-Kent citizens to the goods or services being procured.
- f) Reviewing access to buildings, structures and premises (or parts thereof) that the Municipality purchases, constructs, renovates, leases, or funds.
- g) Assuring that any construction, renovations or repairs undertaken on structures and premises, owned, leased, funded or under the control of the Municipality adhere to the requirements outlined in the Chatham-Kent Facility Accessibility Design Standards (C-K FADS).
- h) Advising “Municipal Departments” on issues and concerns (barriers) faced by citizens, and the means by which “*Municipal Departments*” may work towards the elimination of these barriers.
- i) Advising “Municipal Departments” on universal transportation issues and how to enable barrier-free access for all citizens, issues related to universally accessible forms of public transportation, conventional Urban and Inter-Urban transit and taxi services, specialized services, such as Ride CK Specialized Transit.
- j) Advising on issues of sidewalk design, sidewalk construction, curb cuts, and traffic signalization, to be considered.
- k) Advising, consulting and reporting findings and recommendations to “Municipal Departments” on matters related to the identification of and elimination of barriers.
- l) The AAC shall be informed on matters of government policy (municipal, provincial or federal) affecting persons that may encounter barriers and shall inform “Municipal Departments” about the impact of these policies on Chatham-Kent.

- m) Reviewing and making recommendations on barriers faced by citizens to existing facilities owned, leased, or operated (in full or part) by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.
- n) Reviewing Public Works policies and standards (sidewalks, snow removal, etc.) and advising “Municipal Departments” on accessibility issues that may be encountered therein.
- o) Coordinating the immediate and ongoing dissemination of information in various accessible formats to the community, regarding issues of access faced by all persons.
- p) Creating public awareness of the work undertaken by the AAC.
- q) Supporting, encouraging and being an ongoing resource to “Municipal Departments”, individuals, agencies and the business community by educating and building community awareness about measures (such as the availability of employment, leisure and educational choices) for improving the quality of life for people, through the removal of physical and attitudinal barriers.
- r) Promote the incorporation of universal access standards, and education to overcome attitudinal barriers to make Chatham-Kent an accessible, livable municipality for everyone.

The AAC will schedule meetings monthly, with the exception of July, August and December. Meetings may be scheduled more or less frequently as required to fulfill the duties of the committee.

Meetings of sub-committees or working groups established by the AAC may be scheduled as required.

7.0 Staff Support

The municipal staff support for the Committee is provided by Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries.

- All municipal departments should comply with AODA legislation and apply an accessibility lens in their work, with the support of AAC. Liaisons to the AAC should be identified each Municipal department.

8.0 Reports to Council

A report to Council will be forwarded by the AAC on an annual basis along with the updated Accessibility Report. This report outlines previous and the current year accomplishments achieved in making Chatham-Kent a barrier free community.