



The County of Wellington

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 PREAMBLE

The County of Wellington Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) is jointly established, maintained, and approved by the Councils of the following municipalities for their joint use: Centre Wellington, Town of Erin, Guelph/Eramosa, Mapleton, Town of Minto, Puslinch, Wellington North and the County of Wellington proper.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Within this Terms of Reference the term:

“AAC” refers to: The County of Wellington Accessibility Advisory Committee

“Act 2001” refers to: The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

“Act 2005” refers to: The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

“Barrier” means:

Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

“County” refers to: The County of Wellington

“Disability” means:

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

- d) A mental disorder; or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

This definition of disability is the same as that which is used in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Standing Committee” is the committee through which the Accessibility Advisory Committee reports to County Council. The Chair of the standing committee will provide this report. The current Standing Committee is the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee (AF&HR).

3.0 MANDATE

- 3.1** The AAC is an advisory body to all member Municipal Councils and the County proper and is responsible and accountable to County Council for its activities.
- 3.2** All Councils shall, as required by the Act, seek advice from the AAC with respect to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to people with disabilities, including the preparation, review and evaluation of the Joint Accessibility Plan as outlined in 5.1(a).

4.0 REPORTING STRUCTURE

The AAC will report to County Council through the Administration, Finance and Human Resource Committee (AF&HR).

5.0 DUTIES

The AAC shall be responsible for the following:

5.1 Duties required by the Act:

- a) Participate in the annual development and revision of the Joint Accessibility Plan. The Plan will consider barriers to people with disabilities and ways to remove and prevent those barriers. The Plan will include:
 - i. A report on the steps the Municipalities/County has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities;
 - ii. How the Municipalities/County assesses its by-laws, policies, programmes, practices and services to identify barriers;
 - iii. A list of by-laws, policies, programmes, practices and services the Municipalities/County will review in the coming year to identify barriers;
 - iv. How the Municipalities/County intends to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the coming year; and

- v. All other information required by the Regulations for the purpose of the Plan.
- b) Advise all Councils regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the Joint Accessibility Plan to ensure that it addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in the Municipalities'/County's by-laws, policies, programmes, practices, services and facilities.
- c) Review and monitor existing and proposed procurement policies of the Municipalities/County for the purpose of providing advice with respect to the accessibility for people with disabilities to the goods or services being procured.
- d) Perform all other functions that are specified in the Regulations to the Act.

5.2 Other Duties:

- a) Advise all Councils on issues and concerns faced by people with disabilities and the means by which the Councils can work towards the elimination of barriers.
- b) Advise, consult and report on matters relating to the status of people with disabilities. The AAC shall be informed on matters of government policy (municipal, provincial, federal) affecting people with disabilities and shall inform all Councils about the impact of these policies on the Municipalities/County.
- c) Review and make recommendations on barriers faced by people with disabilities to existing facilities owned, leased, or operated (in full or part) by the Municipalities/County. As a matter of practice, when County Advisory Staff on the AAC become aware of issues or concerns with municipal facilities, a site visit may be conducted. The Municipality owning the facility will be made aware of the visit before it occurs and will be invited to attend*, and recommendations, if any, will be provided by the County Advisory Staff on the AAC. (*amended February 15, 2023)
- d) Establish, as required, working groups as may be necessary to address specific issues.
- e) Review, from time to time, these Terms of Reference and recommend changes as required.

6.0 MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Composition

The AAC will consist of 12 residents of the County of Wellington, as follows:

- a) Three (3) members of County Council – the Warden, and two (2) appointed Council members.
- b) Seven (7) members representing people with disabilities as stated in the Act.
- c) A majority of the Committee members must be people with disabilities.
- d) Two (2) members from the community who are actively involved with organizations for people with disabilities.

6.2 Membership Selection and Term

- a) AAC Council members will be appointed by County Council.
- b) AAC vacancies shall be publicly advertised. County Human Resources Staff shall form an interview committee to consider applications and appointments for all new members.
- c) Committee members will be appointed for a four (4) year term, but can remain on the committee for an additional year(s), provided there are no other applicants for the position.

6.3 Chair

- a) The Warden from County Council will declare the Chair through appointment from the AAC Council members.
- b) The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the AAC, review agendas and liaise with support and advisory staff to ensure effective and efficient administration of the AAC.

7.0 MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

7.1 Members shall be familiar with the Act and this Terms of Reference.

7.2 Members are expected to contribute their expertise during AAC meetings.

7.3 Members shall bring agenda items to the attention of the Deputy Clerk in the County Clerk's office at least 10 working days prior to a meeting.

7.4 Members who miss more than three consecutive meetings will have their membership reviewed by the AAC and may be asked to resign.

7.5 Members shall declare any situation that is, or has the potential to be, a conflict of interest.

8.0 QUORUM

A majority of members is necessary to form a quorum. Quorum is formed when

there is one half (1/2) of members present plus one.

At least one (1) member of County Council and one (1) member of County of Wellington Human Resources staff must be present in order to proceed with the meeting.

9.0 RESOURCES

9.1 Advisory Staff

The Human Resources Department shall provide advisory support to the AAC. Any additional advisory support required from other County Departments will be determined on an ad-hoc basis dependent on the needs of the AAC and the availability of resources.

9.2 Administrative Support

The Deputy Clerk from the County Clerk's office shall provide administrative support to the AAC which includes preparation and distribution of meeting agendas, and taking meeting minutes.

9.3 Additional Resources

From time to time, the AAC may request the advice or participation of individuals or organizations with a particular area of expertise (e.g. municipal Chief Building Official).

10.0 REMUNERATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Members of the AAC will receive remuneration for regularly scheduled AAC meetings. Expenses that are deemed necessary for members to fully participate in the AAC will be reimbursed by the County (e.g. sign language interpretation, Braille translation, transportation, and mileage).

Members will receive remuneration and expense reimbursement for activities above and beyond regularly scheduled meetings, as deemed appropriate by the Human Resources Department.

Members will receive remuneration and expense reimbursement for subsequent meetings, where it is required for a member to attend.

11.0 MEETINGS

Meetings will be scheduled not less than four (4) times per year. A minimum of one (1) meeting must be held. Meetings will be held at the Aboyne Library, or other locations agreed to by the AAC.