



SMITHS FALLS ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved: October, 2019 via Bylaw 10084-2019

MISSION STATEMENT

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) provides advice to Council on identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities. The Committee plays a pivotal role in helping the Town of Smiths Falls become a barrier-free community and ensuring obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) are met.

VISION

To improve the accessibility of Smiths Falls by removing existing barriers and by preventing new barriers from being created.

DEFINITIONS

Barrier 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 communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice;

Disability

- (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, deafness or hearing 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 a 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 insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*;

Municipality refers to the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls.



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MANDATE OF THE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Accessibility Advisory Committee's Mandate is to:

- Update/Develop statements of commitment to accessibility and make them publicly available
- Update/Create written accessibility policies and make them publicly available.
- Create written multi-year accessibility plans, update them at least once every five years and make publicly available.
- Promote awareness of accessibility and inclusion.
- To monitor federal and provincial directives and regulations
- Advise Council on how to make the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls more accessible to people with disabilities.
- Review and advise Council (upon request only) on the following areas:
 - Site plans of new and existing municipal buildings (section 41, planning act)
 - New and existing municipal by-laws
 - Purchases
 - Significant renovations
 - Leased facilities
 - Municipal capital facilities under the Municipal Act
 - Goods and services provided by the municipalities

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

As per Sec 29(3) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, a majority of the members of the committee shall be persons with disabilities.

Voting Members

Up to 2 Members of Council

Five (5) Members – Citizens of Smiths Falls with Disabilities

Two (2) Members – Citizen Volunteers (Residents of Smiths Falls)

- Preference may be given to a member of the business community for one of the two citizen volunteers.

Staff Resources

One (1) TBD or Designate

Personal support workers are welcome to attend meetings for the purpose of providing support to a person with a disability. Personal support workers do not have voting rights.



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COMMITTEE CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

The Committee shall select a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its membership. Members of Council and municipal staff sitting on the committee are not eligible to assume the position of Chair or Vice Chair.

The Chair provides leadership to the Committee, ensures that the Committee carries out its mandate, and acts as the primary liaison between the committee and staff. The staff liaison will prepare the agenda/minutes for each meeting in consultation with the Chair.

If the Chair is temporarily absent, the Vice Chair will assume the position and responsibilities for the Chair in the interim. If the position of Chair becomes vacant, the Vice Chair shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair until a new

Chair can be elected. If the Vice Chair becomes vacant, the Chair may appoint a member of the Committee as Interim Vice Chair until a new Vice Chair can be elected. Election, when required, will be held at the next meeting of the Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

While it is the legislative mandate of the Municipal Council to make the final decision on all matters that affect the Municipality, the role of an advisory committee is to provide recommendations, advice and information to the Municipal Council on those specialized matters which relate to the purpose of the advisory committee, to facilitate public input to Council on programs and ideas and to assist in enhancing the quality of life of the community, in keeping with the Municipal Council's Strategic Plan principles. Advisory committees shall conduct themselves in keeping with the policies set by the Municipal Council pertaining to advisory committees, and also in keeping with the Council Procedure By-law.

All Committee members shall abide by the Terms of Reference for this Committee as approved by Council. All Committee members shall abide by the Policy Respecting the Appointment of Members. Members must be willing to commit to the time required to understand and evaluate the information provided, as well as be open-minded to various opinions and perspectives. Members must also:

- Collaborate on agenda items and priority areas of work for the Task Force
- Regularly attend and actively participate in meetings
- Prepare for meetings and review and/or contribute to reports, as indicated



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The Chair, or a spokesperson appointed by the Committee, may speak on behalf of the Committee to Council or the public. Other members shall not act or speak on behalf of the Committee without prior approval of the Committee.

The Committee and its members will not act outside the mandate and advisory capacity of the Committee. Should the Committee wish to comment on an issue that is within the mandate of another Council committee, the Chair shall consult with the responsible staff resource/liaison and/or the Chair of the other committee/board.

LENGTH OF TERM

Membership term aligns with the term of Council.

MEETINGS

There will be a minimum of six (6) meetings per year. The meetings will be held in an accessible meeting room provided by the Town of Smiths Falls.

QUORUM

A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum. In the event that a quorum is not met, the meeting may proceed but members cannot vote or make decisions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND DELEGATIONS

All Committee meetings are open to the public.

Members of the public are not permitted to participate in Committee discussions but may appear as a delegation. Questions may be asked by the public with the majority consensus of the committee.

Any person wishing to appear before the committee as a delegation must submit a request to the Municipal Clerk's Office, advising of the topic/item they wish to speak on. All requests for delegations must be received at least one week before the meeting to ensure inclusion on the agenda. All delegations will be limited to 10 minutes.

The Chair may eject any member of the public from a meeting if, in the opinion of the Chair, the person is being disruptive or disrespectful.



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STAFF RESOURCES, MINUTES & AGENDAS

The Staff Resource shall provide clerical, administrative and technical assistance to the Committee. The staff resource shall provide the following resources to the Committee:

- Preparing and forwarding meeting materials to members
- Preparation of meeting minutes and correspondence
- Professional advice on matters within the mandate of the Committee
- Assist the Committee in participating in events and activities related to its mandate.

The Staff Resource is provided only to assist the Committee in undertaking their mandate. Additional requests of the staff resource shall be at the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer. Time restraints, budget and workload will be taken into consideration.

The minutes of each Committee meeting will be amended as necessary and approved at the following meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee must abide by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

REPORTING PROCESS

The Smiths Falls Accessibility Advisory Committee is an advisory committee to the Council. The Committee will ensure that people with disabilities are involved in identifying, removing and preventing barriers that impede their full participation in the life of the Town. The Committee will consider issues referred to it by the Town Council or any of its standing committees. It will also consider issues brought to its attention by any member of the public or staff. The Chair of the Committee will report issues and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole for their consideration.

BUDGET

The Committee's annual budget allocation shall be requested on an annual basis during the budget process, based on the goals and objectives of the committee and subject to the adoption of the budget by Council.