

To:	Warden Milne and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	October 26, 2023
Subject / Report No:	CCR-CW-19-23
Title:	Update Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Membership and Terms of Reference
Prepared by:	Kathie Nunno, Contract & Accessibility Coordinator
Reviewed by:	Tara Warder, Clerk
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Georgian Bluffs, Grey Highlands, Hanover, Owen Sound, The Blue Mountains, Southgate, West Grey
Status:	

Recommendation

1. That report CCR-CW-19-23 Update to Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee Membership and Terms of Reference be received; and
2. That the Terms of Reference for the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee be amended by increasing the voting membership to a maximum of nine members from a maximum of seven and by adding the City of Owen Sound as a municipal member; and
3. That staff be directed to initiate the recruitment process for the additional members.

Executive Summary

Grey County Council received a letter from the City of Owen Sound notifying Grey County that the City would like to opt-in to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (GCJAAC) effective February 1, 2024.

The letter further requested that Grey County Council consider adding one public member to the GCJAAC who must reside within the City of Owen Sound.

Background and Discussion

In 2018, report CAOR-CW-17-18 County-Wide Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee was endorsed, which expanded the accessibility advisory committee to a joint format. Members of a joint committee may be chosen in a way that works best for the community and the only requirement is that the majority of committee members have to be people with disabilities.

By law, an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) must be consulted on the following matters:

- Creating, reviewing and updating multi-year accessibility plans
- Developing accessible design criteria in the construction, renovation or placement of bus stops and shelters
- When determining the proportion of on-demand accessible taxis
- About the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces when building new or making major changes to existing on-street parking spaces
- Before building new or making major changes to existing recreational trails (not back country trails) and to help determine particular trail features
- Building or making major changes to existing outdoor play spaces
- The placement of rest areas along exterior paths of travel

Municipal AACs are also expected to review site plans and drawings from developers. These include site plans for subdivisions, municipal offices, community centres and recreational centres. The AAC must also comment on public municipal buildings that are constructed, purchased, leased or significantly renovated.

In addition to all of these requirements, the AAC can also be a resource for providing advice about municipal programs and services. They can identify barriers in our policies and procedures and provide advice for improving our services so they become more inclusive for everyone.

Membership Recruitment

In early 2019, the local Grey County municipalities were invited to join the GCJAAC. There was no deadline set for opting in. Georgian Bluffs, Grey Highlands, Hanover, The Blue Mountains, Southgate, and West Grey joined. Meaford and Owen Sound had their own AACs and Chatsworth, having a population of less than 10,000, opted not to participate. Each participating municipality sends a staff resource who acts as a liaison between the Committee and the member municipality. These members are non-voting.

Public members on the GCJAAC are appointed for the term of Council. Currently, there are seven public members who sit on the GCJAAC. The current public appointments were made late in 2022 at the beginning of the new council term. Councillor appointments are made each year.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) specifically requires that a majority of the members of an AAC shall be persons with disabilities.

Owen Sound City Council at its meeting held on September 25, 2023, considered Staff Report CR-23-077 respecting the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee. In consideration of the report, City Council passed Resolution No. R-230925-003a, requesting that staff send a letter to Grey County to notify them that City Council would like to opt-in to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee ("GCJAAC") effective February 1, 2024. In addition, City Council requested that Grey County Council consider adding one public member to the GCJAAC that must reside within the City of Owen Sound. This request was made with the hope that the City's current Accessibility Advisory Committee members could apply to the GCJAAC, and further that this representation would provide a perspective that is unique to persons living with

disabilities in Owen Sound.

The current requirements for membership on the GCJAAC do not specify geographic restrictions. They don't limit or require a minimum number of members living within a particular municipality. Because the legislation requires that a majority of the members of an AAC shall be persons with disabilities, it can be difficult to recruit enough interested members who identify as having a disability and still meet the membership requirements of the legislation. Staff's concern is that if the Terms of Reference are amended to also require members be from one or more specific municipalities, recruitment could become challenging.

It is staff's recommendation to increase the voting membership of the GCJAAC to up to nine members from the current maximum of seven members but would not impose any requirements around residency from the City of Owen Sound or other municipality. Staff feel structuring the Terms of Reference this way would still achieve greater representation, promote diversity, equity and inclusion, yet wouldn't create additional requirements that could be difficult to adhere to. There is opportunity for a broader knowledge and experience base by increasing membership as well.

If the Terms of Reference are endorsed as noted in the report, staff will undertake a public recruitment process and bring any appointments back to County Council for endorsement. If recruitment was unsuccessful, the GCJAAC could continue with its existing membership without a further change to the Terms of Reference document.

Quorum for either an 8-member committee or a 9-member committee is 5 members.

Legislated Requirements

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11

As a municipality over 10,000, Grey County is required to have an accessibility advisory committee where the majority of the members of the Committee are persons with disabilities. 2005, c. 11, s. 29 (1)

Two or more municipalities may have a joint accessibility advisory committee. 2005, c. 11, s. 29 (7)

Legal Considerations

There are none.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no additional financial implications expected, outside of occasional mileage reimbursements when meetings are held in person. This Committee typically meets electronically.

Increasing the municipal membership in the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee is anticipated to increase the workload for the Contract & Accessibility Coordinator and Deputy

Clerk however it is not anticipated to be significant.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal
 - AODA Compliance: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O, 2005, c. 11, s. 29(1) and s. 29(7)
 - Contribution to Climate Change Action Plan Targets (describe)
- External

Appendices and Attachments

Attachment: Draft Revised Terms of Reference

Correspondence from the City of Owen Sound – Accessibility Advisory Committee Membership

Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Purpose:

To comply with accessibility legislation and to provide comments to Grey County Council and participating local municipal councils, regarding accessibility-related issues and improvements to services.

Participating local municipalities include: The Township of Georgian Bluffs, The Municipality of Grey Highlands, The Town of Hanover, **The City of Owen Sound**, The Township of Southgate, The Town of The Blue Mountains, and The Municipality of West Grey. **Member municipalities may opt in or out at any time. Where a municipality decides it would like to opt in to the Committee, a report with Terms of Reference will be brought forward to County Council for its consideration.**

Scope of Responsibility:

- a) Comment each year about the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of each municipality's multi-year accessibility plan.
- b) Provide review and comment when requested by Council on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises:
 - a. Purchased, constructed, majorly renovated, owned or operated by Grey County and participating municipalities;
 - b. Considered for lease;
 - c. Provided as a municipal capital facility under an agreement, in accordance with the *Municipal Act*.
- c) Review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described under Section 41 of the *Planning Act* when requested.
- d) In response to circulated plans, will review and provide timely comment to the appropriate council, or its designates, on site plans prepared for major renovations and newly constructed developments including new commercial, institutional, industrial, major residential and other development subject to site plan control under a participating municipality.
- e) Perform other functions required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its regulations.
- f) Review programs and services and provide feedback to make practices more inclusive.

Voting Membership

The Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee will consist of up to ~~seven~~ **nine** members. Membership will include

- a) The majority of voting members must be persons with disabilities, as defined under the AODA;
- b) A caregiver of a person with a disability;
- c) A public advocate for people with disabilities with a high degree of accessibility knowledge.
- d) One representative from Grey County Council

Members will be appointed by County Council for the term of council and members are eligible for re-appointment.

Non-Voting Members

The Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee's non-voting members will consist of:

- a) One staff resource from each participating local municipality
- b) Grey County staff lead for accessibility

Chair and Vice Chair:

The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected from the voting membership annually.

Meetings:

At a minimum, the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee meets quarterly. Additional meetings may occur as required.

~~Meetings will occur quarterly at the call of the Chair, or as determined by the committee (approximately four times per year).~~

Quorum:

A quorum shall consist of more than 50% of the membership of the Committee.

Compensation:

Public voting members will be reimbursed mileage or other similar travel costs.

Statutory Authority:

Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Grey County Procedural By-Law

Local Municipal Procedural By-Laws

Reporting Relationship:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will report to Grey County Committee of the Whole and meeting minutes will be circulated with the participating local municipalities.

Lead Staff:

Grey County Contract & Accessibility Coordinator
Designated liaison for each local municipality
Grey County Clerk
Grey County Deputy Clerk

Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk
City of Owen Sound
808 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4



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Website: www.owensound.ca

September 28, 2023

Via Email

Grey County Council
c/o Tara Warder, County Clerk
595 9th Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3
tara.warder@grey.ca

Dear Grey County Council:

Re: Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Owen Sound City Council ("City Council") at its meeting held on September 25, 2023, considered [Staff Report CR-23-077](#) respecting the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee. In consideration of the report, City Council passed Resolution No. R-230925-003a, requesting that staff send a letter to Grey County to notify them that City Council would like to opt-in to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee ("GCJAAC") effective February 1, 2024.

In addition, City Council is requesting that Grey County Council consider adding one (1) public member to the GCJAAC that must reside within the City of Owen Sound. This additional member would provide an opportunity for:

- the City's current Accessibility Advisory Committee members to apply to the GCJAAC; and
- representation on the GCJAAC that is unique to persons living with disabilities in Owen Sound.

Thank you for considering this request. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Staci Landry".

Staci Landry
Deputy Clerk

cc: Owen Sound City Council
Tim Simmonds, City Manager
Christine Farrell, Chair of the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee

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