Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee

Date: Thursday, February 28, 2019

Location: Conestoga Room, City of Kitchener

Present: Greg Moore (Co-Chair), Rob Bender, Donna Hartzler, Brenda Robinson, Jolene MacDonald, Keri Cameron (Telephone), Councillor Sue Foxton (Region of Waterloo), Councillor Sandra Hanmer (City of Waterloo), Lolita Paroski (City of Kitchener/City of Waterloo) Sanjay Govindaraj (Region of Waterloo), Tracey Murray (Township of Wilmot), Jeff Smith (Township of Woolwich)

Regrets: Sharon Giles (Co-Chair), Paula Saunders, Gail Brunsdon, Councillor Kelly Galloway-Sealock, Ashley Sage (Township of North Dumries), Dawn Clelland

Absent: Amy Harron (Township of Wellesley)

Guests: William Towns, Eric Pisani, Kevin Van Ooteghem, Mary Catherine Lorentz, Nicholas Cloet

Welcome and Introductions

Greg called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Round table introductions

2.0 Approval of December Minutes and February Agenda

Motion to accept the December minutes – moved by Donna and seconded by Jolene, carried.

3.0 Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

None

4.0 Overview of GRT Alternative Service Delivery Pilot Projects

An overview of GRT’s Alternative Service Delivery Pilot Projects presented to the committee by William Towns. GRT is piloting on-demand/flexible transit in urban areas where fixed-route transit is not feasible or cost effective. The goal is to “provide cost effective mobility in low-demand areas to mitigate gaps in service proximity” using the following guiding principles:

- Cost effective
- Proximity
- Accessibility
Three pilots launched in the fall of 2018:

1. South Kitchener (901 Flex Trinity-Freeport) (fully accessible), focused around Trinity Village Care Centre and Grand River Hospital Freeport Campus. This is a community bus with low-floor, 19 seats (fully accessible) with fixed and flex stop locations. Runs from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

2. Central Hespeler (902 Flex Hespeler Village) (accessible taxis provided however, need to be requested) focused around Jacob Hespeler Lodge and W.G. Johnson Centre. These are subsidized taxis (partnership with Golden Triangle Taxi) – accessible taxis upon request. Daily schedule developed in consultation with local residents. Taxis identified by black and yellow logo.

3. Northwest Waterloo (903 Flex Northwest Waterloo) (GRT is not able to provide wheelchair-accessible vehicles via the 903 Flex) focused around Columbia Forest Long-Term Care Centre and low-density Laurelwood, Beechwood, Vista Hills, and Erbsville neighbourhoods. 903 Flex is in partnership with RideCo, a ride sharing company that takes customers from similar areas to their selected destinations using sedans. Rides take place from 6:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and 1:45 to 6:45 p.m. Monday to Friday. An app can be used to book trips but trips can also be booked without a Smart Phone. Open to feedback regarding the app service.

Fare payment is based on GRT family of services.

Pilot finishes July to September 2019. Performance monitoring underway regarding ridership, cost effectiveness, reliability, effectiveness of booking tool/method, customer satisfaction surveys, and accessibility issues. Decisions about future of pilots in 2019. More information call GRT at 519-585-7555 or contact Will Towns at wtowns@regionofwaterloo.ca or 519-585-7555 x7379 or visit grt.ca/flexibletransit

Discussion with committee members.

5.0 Township of Woolwich 2018 Status Update

1. Contribute financially to the operation of GRAAC
2. Provide staff support to GRAAC through the attendance at monthly meetings and as requested by members of the Committee and staff representatives.
4. Review and monitor content on the Township’s website in accordance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements.
5. The Township will review and consider alternative voting options to increase accessibility during the 2018 Municipal Election.
6. The Fire Department added accessible entrances to the St. Jacobs Fire Hall. This facility already has accessible washrooms.
7. A new Fire Hall in Breslau was constructed and meets accessibility requirements.

2019 Initiatives

1. Continue to contribute financially to the operation of GRAAC
2. Continue to provide staff support to GRAAC through the attendance at monthly meetings and as requested by members of the Committee and staff representatives.
3. Continue to review and monitor Provincial accessibility legislation
4. The Township will continue to review and monitor content on the Township’s website in accordance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA requirements
5. A new Fire Hall in Elmira is planned for 2019. This will be an accessible facility in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and the AODA. **Delayed due to 2023 budget constraints**
6. Begin reviewing and drafting the Township’s next Multi-Year Accessibility Plan **Plan to start in the summer**

### 6.0 Elections
Gail Brundson has joined the meeting via email to participate in the elections

**Position = GRAAC Co-chairs**
- Greg nominates Jolene - accepted
- Sue nominates Gail - not accepted
- Brenda nominates Brenda - accepted
- Sue nominates Keri - not accepted

**Position = Chair of Built Environment**
Paula Saunders provided a letter stating her interest to stand as Chair of Built Environment. Greg nominates Paula Saunders.
No further nominations.
Elections closed and results announced after break.

**Break**

### 7.0 Election Results – Jeff Smith, Tracey Murray
By acclamation Co-Chairs – Brenda Robinson & Jolene MacDonald
And by acclamation Paula Saunders - Chair of Built Environment

### 8.0 Township of Wilmot 2018 Status Update
- Milton and Byron Street reconstruction included, a new pedestrian connection located on Milton Street between Shade Street and Byron Street. Existing sidewalks where removed and replaced with sidewalks up to the current accessibility standards complete with tactile plates at pedestrian road crossing locations.
- Two additional pedestrian road crossing where established in New Hamburg at the North East corner of Good Street and Boullee Street and Baden at the walkway from Baden Public School located on Isaac Shantz Drive complete with tactile plates.
- This year approximately 300 trip hazards where identified through the municipality’s annual inventory of sidewalk and where eliminated by the annual sidewalk program.

### 9.0 Climate Change & Extreme Weather Input on Action Plan
An update of the Community Climate Adaption plan was presented to the committee by Nicholas Cloet. Extreme weather events can significantly impact local health and safety, property, Infrastructure, water quality, and the natural environment. Local research shows we can expect more extreme heat, intense rainfall, freezing rain events, storms, and strong winds due to
climate change. The Community Climate Adaption (CCA) plan will help us understand how the impacts of climate change may affect our community. It will also encourage Waterloo Region citizens to work together and become more resilient to changing climate conditions and extreme weather.

**Current and Upcoming Actions 2019**

- Identify which adaption action ideas can be effectively implemented and included in the CCA plan. Conversations, meetings, workshops with local stakeholder groups through January and February.
- Action prioritization will address questions to identify drivers and constraints that may affect implementation such as:
  1. Which adaptation actions appear to have good potential for implementation?
  2. Do any of these adaptation actions appear to have significant challenges that would interfere with implementation?
  3. What factors will be necessary to for successful implementation i.e. key partners, sources of funding.

Impact Discussion with the committee with ideas noted by Nicholas.

**More information available at:**

10.0 Accessible Taxi Fund, GRAAC rep

Accessible Taxi Fund

$110,000 in the fund. It is a small group that decides what to do with the money. Looking for someone to join the committee. The meetings are two hours long twice a year and are held at 150 Frederick. Anyone interested email Sanjay. Sanjay will bring forward to next meeting. Sanjay to research how other municipalities manage to have on demand accessible taxis available.

**Active Transportation Advisory Committee**

Active Transportation Advisory Committee once a month on the third Tuesday of the month at 5pm. Looking for a GRAAC member to volunteer to join. Looking for sign up for a four year term but can try for a one year. Look up Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Brenda has volunteered to be the GRAAC representative starting in April until December 2019.

11.0 Councillor Reports

Councillor Sandra Hanmer let the committee know budget preparations are under way and that snow and ice removal is an ongoing conversation with council and staff.

Councillor Sue Foxton let the committee know that she is always pursuing more money be allocated to the accessible taxi fund.

12.0 Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex (WMRC) Expansion

WMRC Expansion update presented by Kevin Van Ooteghem and Mary Cathryn Lorentz. An overview of the plans for the WMRC expansion were presented to the committee. It will be a
multigenerational building, with multi use theme rooms and a relocation of older adult Facilities in Waterloo. The existing older adult facilities pose a lot of barriers. New spaces in the facility are going to be built with accessibility front of mind. Location of the WMRC is the uptown core on Father David Bauer Drive. Transportation map to and from the facility was shown and it was noted that currently there is no GRT service that goes directly to the facility. Dedicated pedestrian zones have been designed to give walkers separation from vehicles in the parking areas. Looking for constructive feedback from the committee for washroom designs.

Engagement with GRAAC through the Built Environment committee will be ongoing through the process.

13.0 Co-chair/Staff Reports

Lolita Paroski (City of Waterloo/City of Kitchener)

Two emails sent with opportunities for the committee:
1. Ministry Training Webinar for Municipal Accessibility Advisory committees available. Rob, Donna, Jolene, and Brenda are interested. Tracey Murray (Township of Wilmot) will coordinate the webinar in Baden on March 8 from 1:00 -2:30 p.m. Other dates are also available and listed on the email if interested.
2. Kitchener’s Cycling and Trails Master Plan committee
Looking for a volunteer from GRAAC to join with other advisory groups to address accessibility on the walking paths and trails. 15 month commitment. If interested please contact Lolita.

Sanjay Govindaraj (Region of Waterloo)

Region of Waterloo continues to work on updating our main website to meet AODA requirements and also review secondary websites that we support. The 2018 Diversity Accessibility and Inclusion progress report will be coming to Regional Council in April.

Motion to Adjourn by Rob, seconded by Donna and carried.

Next meeting will be on Thursday March 28, 2019
City of Kitchener, 200 King St West, Conestoga Room

Please send regrets to:
Janis McKenzie at janis.mckenzie@kitchener.ca
or call 519-741-2200 Ext. 7225