



GRAAC GRAND RIVER
ACCESSIBILITY
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee

Date: Thursday, March 28, 2019

Location: Conestoga Room, City of Kitchener

Present: Donna Hartzler, Brenda Robinson (Co-Chair), Jolene MacDonald (Co-Chair), Sharon Giles, Councillor Sue Foxton (Region of Waterloo), Councillor Sandra Hanmer (City of Waterloo) (telephone), Lolita Paroski (City of Kitchener/City of Waterloo) Sanjay Govindaraj (Region of Waterloo), Janis McKenzie (minutes)

Regrets: Gail Brunsdon, Rob Bender, Ashley Sage (Township of North Dumfries), Greg Moore, Keri Cameron, Tracey Murray (Township of Wilmot), Paula Saunders, Councillor Sarah Marsh (City of Kitchener)

Absent: Jeff Smith (Township of Woolwich), Dawn Clelland, Amy Harron (Township of Wellesley)

Guests: Reid Fulton, Sarah-Beth Bianchi, Michael May, Thomas Hudacin, Amy Ross, Jaclyn Varga, Mayor Vrbanovic

Welcome and Introductions

Brenda called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Round table introductions

2.0 Approval of February Minutes

Motion to accept the February minutes – quorum not met, minutes tabled until next month.

3.0 Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

None

4.0 Region of Waterloo GRT Audio announcements & displays – Reid Fulton

Large style screens at ION stations which will include information included on the nextride.grt.ca website and routes departure information for the buses located next to the ION stations.

Location options in the stations are still under discussion. A lot of different factors around location spots, visibility, vandalism, block sight lines, maintenance etc. need to be taken into

consideration. Audio options, format the website and have something built into the station are being considered as well. Committee suggestions were that patrons who have learning disabilities/visual disabilities and no English need to be considered. Dedicated phone line suggested in all stations. Using the transit app out of Montreal, trip planning with all GRT information. Not everyone has the screen reader app on the phone. Ensuring all the tools are available for everyone.

5.0 City of Kitchener Accessibility for public access technology – Sara-Beth Bianchi

The inability to access digital technology creates barriers to social, civic, and professional engagement and development. As the City offers more services online, we risk exacerbating this digital divide for our residents. The City of Kitchener offers the Public Access Technology Service (PATS) to bridge this gap and foster Digital Inclusion within our community. The goal of this set of measures is to verify that the program is addressing the key needs of the community and keeping pace with the changing technology landscape. As more aspects of Canadian society include online or technology-facilitated elements, the City can use these measures to ensure the PATS evolves to continue meeting those needs. PATS is designed to meet the needs of all users – including those who require accessibility support. The City can use this measure to ensure a minimum level of accessibility of the physical space, software and hardware used within the PATS. These baselines do not supersede the need to adhere to legislative requirements to address the accessibility needs of staff and the public. Staff are seeking guidance from the committee to identify evaluation criteria related to the following elements of accessibility:

- Physical accessibility & ergonomics
- Technology accessibility

Committee asked to share knowledge regarding monitor minimum size, audio jacks, mouse etc. Committee feedback:

- Feedback directly from the user (leave contact information).
- Physical layouts, screen reader software, staff trained to use the technology
- Alternative language.

Standard baseline to be high not low. Sarah-Beth to send questionnaire to GRAAC members via email. Future site visit can be arranged the Built Environment subcommittee of GRAAC. Sara-Beth would like to come back to the committee.

6.0 City of Kitchener Mayors Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (Membership selection) – Michael May, Mayor Vrbancovic

The Task Force will lead the creation of a City of Kitchener Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy that will make recommendations to Kitchener City Council in the following areas:

1. Better engaging our entire community in the municipal decision-making process – especially marginalized and under-represented people.
2. Improving service delivery to Kitchener's diverse population.

3. Creating a more inclusive workplace and workforce.
4. Celebrating the full diversity of the community.

The Task Force will be made up of a combination of: (1) members of the community, (2) City staff, (3) and representatives from key community partner organizations. The Task Force will meet once per month until the work is complete (approximately 12 to 18 months). Meetings are anticipated to be 3 hours each. April 2020 is the target to complete the strategy and present it to City Council.

GRAAC members asked to select a representative to join City of Kitchener Mayors Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Presentation will be sent out to the missing committee members with the question regarding a representative. Lolita to add to the April GRAAC agenda. City of Kitchener Mayors Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to be a standing item on the agenda moving forward and representative to bring updates back to the committee.

Break

7.0 Region of Waterloo Accessible Taxi Fund Committee – Thomas Hudacin

Thomas Hudacin, acting Manager of Licensing for the Region of Waterloo shared that the money coming from Uber transit totalling \$110,000 included \$30,000 distributed to the taxis. The taxi industry needs to come up with a plan before money is distributed. Still in the preliminary stages. End goal is to deliver the service in a timely manner. To be added to the April agenda anyone interested from GRAAC to be part of the Region of Waterloo Accessible Taxi Fund Committee.

8.0 City of Waterloo Strategic Plan committee input – Amy Ross and Jaclyn Varga

The City of Waterloo strategic planning process is underway as a hybrid model designed to support building a plan that reflects and best serves their community and organization for the next four years.

Project Phases:

- Initiated from June to September 2018
- Scan from September 2018 to January 2019
- Develop a plan from January to April 2019
- Validate and mobilize the plan May to June 2019

Emerging Strategic Themes:

1. Sustainability and the environment
2. Safe, sustainable transportation
3. Inclusion
4. Strong community and resilient neighbourhoods
5. Quality of pace
6. Affordability
7. Infrastructure renewal

8. Engagement and communication
9. Growth and development
10. Corporate excellence

Next Steps:

- On April 29, 2019 a draft Strategic Plan report will be presented to Council
- Consultation to affirm the plan will be conducted in May 2019
- On June 24, 2019 the Final Strategic Plan report will be presented to Council
- City of Waterloo Business Plans and a three year (2020 to 2022) budget development will follow

Worksheet handed out to committee members to fill out their top three out of ten emerging themes.

9.0 Councillor Reports

- Councillor Sandra Hanmer shared that the strategic plan is a council priority as well as, the unsanctioned events with the university students. Discussing recommendations and updates for 2020. The Mayors state of the city address will be held at Rim park on Tuesday at 7:30 am. Councillor Hanmer to send the information to the committee via email.
- Councillor Sue Foxton spoke to the accessible taxi discussion and mentioned it was a priority with council as well.

10.0 Co-chair/Staff Reports

- Jolene/Brenda spoke to the webinar presentation that it was informative and new processes may be useful.
- Sanjay shared the City of Ottawa uses a template for presenters. Sanjay and Lolita to take back to staff rep meeting to discuss.
- Lolita updated the committee that Dawn Clelland will be the rep from GRAAC on the Community Working Group, Kitchener Cycling and Trails Master plan. Dawn will be attending monthly meetings and providing updates to GRAAC.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting will be on Thursday April 25, 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