



**Accessibility
Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda**

**Wednesday, May 8, 2019
7 p.m.**

**Holland Room
Aurora Town Hall**

Public Release
May 1, 2019



**Town of Aurora
Accessibility Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda**

Date: Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Time and Location: 7 p.m., Holland Room, Aurora Town Hall

1. Approval of the Agenda

Recommended:

That the agenda as circulated by Legislative Services be approved.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

3. Receipt of the Minutes

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 3, 2019

Recommended:

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes of April 3, 2019, be received for information.

4. Delegations

5. Matters for Consideration

1. Round Table Discussion

Re: National AccessAbility Week

Recommended:

1. That the comments and suggestions regarding National AccessAbility Week be received and referred to staff for consideration and action as appropriate.

2. Round Table Discussion

Re: Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024

Recommended:

1. That the comments and suggestions regarding the Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 be received and referred to staff for consideration and action as appropriate.

3. Round Table Discussion

Re: Accessibility Trailer – Whitchurch Stouffville

Recommended:

1. That the comments and suggestions regarding the Accessibility Trailer – Whitchurch Stouffville be received and referred to staff for consideration and action as appropriate.

4. Round Table Discussion

Re: Changes to Social Assistance

Recommended:

1. That the comments and suggestions regarding the Changes to Social Assistance be received.

6. Informational Items

7. Adjournment



**Town of Aurora
Accessibility Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Date:	Wednesday, April 3, 2019
Time and Location:	7 p.m., Holland Room, Aurora Town Hall
Committee Members:	John Lenchak (Chair), Hailey Reiss (Vice Chair), Matthew Abas, Gordon Barnes, Max Le Moine, Jo-anne Spitzer, and Councillor Rachel Gilliland
Members Absent:	None
Other Attendees:	Ivy Henriksen, Manager of Customer Service, Mat Zawada, Accessibility Advisor, and Nicole Trudeau, Committee Coordinator

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Gordon Barnes

Seconded by Jo-anne Spitzer

That the agenda as circulated by Legislative Services, with the following additional item, be approved:

- Item 5 – Memorandum from Accessibility Advisor; Re: Accessible Trailer Application

Carried

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50*.

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3. Receipt of the Minutes

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2019

Moved by Councillor Gilliland

Seconded by Max Le Moine

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes of March 6, 2019, be received for information.

Carried

4. Delegations

None

5. Matters for Consideration

1. Memorandum from Accessibility Advisor

Re: Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024

Staff provided an overview of the contents in the Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 including Appendix "A" – Completed Items, Appendix "B" – Recommended Accessibility Items 2018-2024 and Appendix "C" – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Implementation Plan 2018-2024.

The Committee requested that the Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 be a standing item on the Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda for continued discussion, including recommended accessibility items.

Moved by Max Le Moine

Seconded by Jo-anne Spitzer

1. That the memorandum regarding Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 be received; and
2. That the following Accessibility Advisory Committee comments regarding the Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 be considered by staff:

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- (a) That the Town of Aurora Accessibility Plan 2018 to 2024 be a standing item on the Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda, beginning with the next Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting on May 8, 2019.

Carried

6. Informational Items

2. Memorandum from Max Le Moine, Accessibility Advisory Committee Member

Re: National AccessAbility Week Proposal

Mr. Le Moine presented an overview of the National AccessAbility Week Proposal including official dates, celebration dates, event calendar, internal (Aurora Public Library and Town staff) and external (school boards and community organizations) involvement, and next steps.

The Committee discussed the activities taking place during National AccessAbility Week, being recognized from May 26 to June 1, 2019, including an information fair (Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre), historical displays (Town Hall), lunch and learn (Council Chambers), open house (Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre), and book displays (Aurora Public Library), along with suggestions for additional participation and community involvement.

**Moved by Gordon Barnes
Seconded by Matthew Abas**

1. That the memorandum and presentation regarding National AccessAbility Week Proposal be received for information.

Carried

3. Memorandum from Accessibility Advisor Re: Wildlife Park Trail

Staff provided an overview of the design and technical requirements of the Wildlife Park Trail, to address comments made by the Committee at the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting on March 6, 2019, including rest areas, natural features of the area and an accessible exterior path of travel (entrances, ramps and handrails).

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The Committee discussed the location and design of rest areas, along with an opportunity for the Committee to provide comments on the location and placement of rest areas at a future Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting.

**Moved by Gordon Barnes
Seconded by Max Le Moine**

1. That the memorandum regarding Wildlife Park Trail be received for information.

Carried

**4. Memorandum from Accessibility Advisor
Re: 2019 Community Recognition Awards**

Staff provided an overview of the 2019 Community Recognition Awards including award categories and criteria, as Committee members were encouraged to participate and nominate individuals, groups or businesses for an award, including the Inclusivity Award.

The Committee was also encouraged to visit www.aurora.ca/cra before the nomination deadline on Friday, April 5, 2019, for more information including a full list of award categories and to download a nomination form.

**Moved by Matthew Abas
Seconded by Gordon Barnes**

1. That the memorandum regarding 2019 Community Recognition Awards be received; and
2. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee members be encouraged to submit nominations for the 2019 Community Recognition Awards.

Carried

**5. Memorandum from Accessibility Advisor
Re: Accessible Trailer Application**

Staff provided an overview of the Accessible Trailer Application from the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville including availability for outdoor events (May to October), expectations of Whitchurch-Stouffville staff and renters

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(municipalities and school boards), and the increased rental price per day, plus damage deposit.

The Committee discussed the financial contributions made to Whitchurch-Stouffville to fund the accessible trailer, including the donation from the Town of Aurora, along with suggestions to give or exchange information with other municipalities to assess the need, identify barriers and issues of concern.

**Moved by Max Le Moine
Seconded by Hailey Reiss**

1. That the memorandum regarding Accessible Trailer Application be received for information.

Carried

7. Adjournment

**Moved by Matthew Abas
Seconded by Jo-anne Spitzer**

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Carried

Changes to Social Assistance: What Was Announced and What It Means

What is social assistance?

- Basic financial assistance for the “benefit unit”: eligible individuals, their spouses/partners and dependants
 - Ontario Works (OW, “welfare”) - limited/no income, must participate in job readiness program unless exempt, administered by municipalities
 - Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) - people with disabilities (or within a prescribed class), limited/no income, administered by province
- Rates for Single Person
 - OW: Basic Needs \$343, Shelter – max \$390 = \$733
 - ODSP: Basic Needs \$682, Shelter – max \$497 = \$1169

Why are we here?

- Lisa MacLeod (Minister of Children, Community and Social Services) announced changes to the Social Assistance system
- Government’s stated priorities for marginalized communities: moving people to employment, locally-focused social services, supporting people with disabilities “with dignity”, cutting red tape and restoring accountability
- Changes will happen over next 18 months from November 2018

(1) Limited Rate Increases

- Rate increase of 1.5% in September/October 2018
- No promises for future investments in benefit rates or recognition that current rates are inadequate
- Claim that people will benefit from low income tax credit (LIFT)
 - Max \$850/single person
 - Few people on OW or ODSP will benefit
 - Doesn’t start helping until 2020

(2) Earned Income Exemption

- Current rules:
 - Keep first \$200 / month (OW and ODSP)
 - Clawback of 50% on any additional money earned from work
- Proposed new rules:
 - OW: Keep first \$300 / month (starting after 1 month instead of 3)
 - ODSP: Keep first \$6000 / year
 - Clawback of 75% on any additional money earned from work
- Results:
 - Less benefit the more you work
 - OW - Better off if earn \$201 - \$499/month, worse off if earn more than \$500 per month
 - Faster ineligibility
 - OW – Ineligible at \$1277, versus now at \$1666

(3) Changing the Definition of Disability

- Current ODSP definition:
 - (a) substantial physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent and expected to last one year or more;
 - (b) effect of the impairment results in a substantial restriction in activities of daily living; and
 - (c) verified by health care provider
- Current CPP-D definition:
 - “Severe and prolonged”
 - Not able to work at all or on a regular basis
 - Likely to last a long or unknown time or eventually cause your death
- Many people with disabilities will not qualify for ODSP, such as those with episodic disabilities, shorter-term / not permanent health conditions
 - Examples: multiple sclerosis, mental health disabilities, sickle cell anemia, rheumatoid arthritis, hepatitis C, chronic fatigue syndrome, chronic pain, migraine, some forms of cancer
- Forced to rely on OW
 - 37% less in benefits (single person from \$1169 to \$733)
 - Work / training requirements
 - Will they have access to health-related benefits?
- Unclear what test the government will apply to medical reviews

What don't we know?

- How will rates be simplified?
- How will disability-related benefits be consolidated? Who will have access, to how much money, by what means?
- How will local discretionary funds be allocated and distributed?
- What wrap-around services will be provided? To whom? What will be the consequences for not participating?

What does this mean?

Ontario Works	ODSP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people with disabilities getting less money than ODSP and being required to try to work • Higher monthly earnings exemption but also higher clawbacks • Wrap-around supports – good for people in crisis but may not be enough for people with disabilities • Local service delivery • Fewer mandatory benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer people with disabilities qualify – only “severe” and “prolonged” • Health Spending Account • Higher earnings exemption calculated annually, but also higher clawbacks • No information on access to supports for employment or community participation even if people want to work

What can I do?

- Inform others
- Talk to your MPP about what you think of the changes
- Write to Minister MacLeod

CHANGES TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE: What Was Announced, What It Means, and What's Next

Your Name and Your Clinic Name
Date here

Information partners: Income Security Advocacy Centre
Social Assistance and Action Committee

Who are we?

- INCLUDE INFORMATION HERE ABOUT YOUR CLINIC AND WHAT YOU DO
- This presentation was created in partnership with the Income Security Advocacy Centre (a specialty legal clinic) and the Social Assistance Action Committee (a group of GTA legal clinic caseworkers)

Social Assistance in Ontario

- Basic financial assistance for the “benefit unit”: eligible individuals, their spouses/partners and dependants
 - Ontario Works (OW, aka “welfare”) for people who have limited/no income, recipients must participate in job readiness program unless exempt, administered by the municipalities
 - Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for people with disabilities who have limited/no income, or those who qualify as a prescribed class, administered by the province
- Rates for a Single Person
 - OW: Basic Needs \$343, *Shelter – max \$390 = **\$733**
 - ODSP: Basic Needs \$672, *Shelter – max \$497 = **\$1169**

Changes to Social Assistance

- Lisa MacLeod, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, announced changes to the Social Assistance system
- Government's stated priorities for marginalized communities
 - Moving people to employment
 - Locally-focused social services
 - Supporting people with disabilities "with dignity"
 - Cutting red tape and restoring accountability
- When will the changes happen?
 - Over next 18 months
 - More details expected in "Winter 2019"
- First steps
 - Work with municipalities on a phase-in plan
 - Consult with First Nations to develop a specific approach

1. Limited rate increases

- Rate increase of 1.5% in September/October 2018
- No mention of how inadequate rates are or any announcement about future investments in benefit rates
- 1 in 7 people in Ontario live in poverty
 - Many of those people are living on social assistance
- LIFT – low income tax credit
 - max \$850/single person
 - Initial analysis shows that very few people on OW or ODSP will benefit
 - One in six Ontario taxpayers would get the LIFT Credit and, on average, would receive about \$450 in tax relief starting January 1, 2019. Will not be relevant until July 2020.

2. Earned income exemptions

- Current rules:
 - Keep first \$200 / month without deductions – both OW and ODSP
 - Clawback of 50% on any additional money earned from work
- Proposed new rules:
 - Keep first \$300 / month (starting after first month instead of three months) on OW
 - Keep first \$6000 / year on ODSP, regardless of month in which income is earned
 - Clawback of 75% on any additional money earned from work

Impact on total income – Ontario Works

Impact on total monthly income for single person on Ontario Works								
Amount eligible for from OW (basic needs and maximum shelter)	Income from work (net income)	Current Rules: first \$200 in net income exempt, then 50% deducted			Proposed Rules: first \$300 in net income exempt, then 75% deducted			Change in total income
		Amount deducted from OW benefit	Amount person gets from OW	Total income (Income from work + Amount from OW)	Amount deducted from OW benefit	Amount person gets from OW	Total income (Income from work + Amount from OW)	
\$733	\$100	\$0	\$733	\$833	\$0	\$733	\$833	\$0
\$733	\$200	\$0	\$733	\$933	\$0	\$733	\$933	\$0
\$733	\$300	\$50	\$683	\$983	\$0	\$733	\$1033	+ \$50
\$733	\$400	\$100	\$633	\$1033	\$75	\$658	\$1058	+ \$25
\$733	\$500	\$150	\$583	\$1083	\$150	\$583	\$1083	\$0
\$733	\$600	\$200	\$533	\$1133	\$225	\$508	\$1108	- \$25
\$733	\$700	\$250	\$483	\$1183	\$300	\$433	\$1133	- \$50
\$733	\$800	\$300	\$433	\$1233	\$375	\$358	\$1158	- \$75
\$733	\$900	\$350	\$383	\$1283	\$450	\$283	\$1183	- \$100

Impact on total income – ODSP

- Change to annual exemption amount may be good for people with episodic disabilities or unpredictable work
- Can earn \$3600 more without deductions = more income for those who can work, at least if earning a certain amount
- Less benefit the more you work
- Worse off if earning over \$13,200 annually (equal to \$1100 / month)
- Unclear about income reporting – monthly or annually?

3. Changing the Definition of Disability

- “Looking at aligning Ontario’s new definition of ‘disability’ more closely with federal government guidelines”
 - Current ODSP definition:
 - (a) substantial physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent and expected to last one year or more;
 - (b) effect of the impairment results in a substantial restriction in activities of daily living; and
 - (c) verified by health care provider
 - Current CPP-D definition:
 - “Severe and prolonged”
 - Not able to work at all or on a regular basis and can only earn a small amount
 - Likely to last a long or unknown time or eventually cause your death

What will this mean for people applying for ODSP in the future?

- Many people with disabilities will not qualify for ODSP
 - Episodic disabilities, shorter-term / not permanent health conditions
 - For example, multiple sclerosis, mental health disabilities, sickle cell anemia, rheumatoid arthritis, hepatitis C, chronic fatigue syndrome, chronic pain, migraine, some forms of cancer, etc.
- Will be forced to rely on Ontario Works
 - 37% less in benefits (e.g., from \$1169 to \$733)
 - Work / training requirements: “Participation Agreements” / “Action Plans”
 - Will they have access to health-related benefits?

TIP: APPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR ODSP (IF SUFFICIENT MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION IS AVAILABLE) IN ORDER TO BE ASSESSED UNDER THE CURRENT RULES

What will this mean to people on ODSP now?

- The government has indicated it will grand-parent most current recipients, but there are many unknowns
- Medical Reviews
 - Many current ODSP recipients have “Medical Review Dates”
 - This means that on or after this date, ODSP can check in to see if the person still meets the definition of “Disability” in order to continue to receive ODSP benefits
 - It is unclear which test will be used to judge if the person still has a disability
- Rapid Reinstatement
 - Currently, if someone stops receiving ODSP (for a reason other than being found not to be disabled on medical review) then that person can apply for Rapid Reinstatement to get back on benefits when they become eligible again
 - Often this happens when people earn too much money for a period of time or move out and then back to the province
 - It is unclear if Rapid Reinstatement will continue, or if former recipients will need to prove they meet the new definition of disability

What don't we know?

- How will rates be simplified?
 - Currently, benefit rate depends on many factors including shelter cost, the number of people in the family, the characteristics of the family member (spouse, child under 18, child over 18)
 - Government says that the number of rates will reduce from 240 to 4 – but how?
- How will disability-related benefits be consolidated? Who will have access to these benefits? How much will they receive, and by what means?
 - Current supplemental benefits include: Special Diet Allowance, Work-Related Benefit, Mandatory Special Necessities (diabetic and surgical supplies, incontinence supplies, medical transportation), Assistive Device Co-Payments, Vision Care
 - Government announced that people with disabilities will be able to select their own health-related expenses through this “Health Spending Account”

What don't we know?

- How will local discretionary funds be allocated and distributed?
 - Often when funds are downloaded to municipalities they become discretionary so there is no longer a right to appeal if you are denied the benefit
 - Will there be enough funding to meet the needs of recipients?
- What wrap-around services will be provided? To whom? What will be the consequences for not participating?
 - Wrap-around services recognize that people are not necessarily “job ready” – they need life stabilization before employment
 - Commitment to improve access to mental health and addiction supports, childcare, housing, life skills, job training
 - If a recipient chooses not to participate in a program that their caseworker recommends, will this affect their benefits?

What do these changes look like all together?

- Ontario Works
 - More people with disabilities relying on it
 - Less money in monthly benefits than ODSP
 - Requirements to work / take employment-related training – “Action Plans”
 - Higher monthly earnings exemption but also higher clawbacks
 - Wrap-around supports – good for people in crisis who need specific supports but may not be enough for people with disabilities
 - Local service delivery – incentives and outcomes for employment services unclear
 - Fewer mandatory benefits
- ODSP
 - Fewer people with disabilities qualify – only “severe” and “prolonged” disabilities
 - Health Spending Account
 - Higher earnings exemption calculated annually, but also higher clawbacks
 - No information on access to supports for employment or community participation even if people want to work

NEXT STEPS/QUESTIONS?