

## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Delegation – November 22, 2023**

Mayor and Council

Thank you for having us this evening. Further to our Delegation on June 19<sup>th</sup> 2023, the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) would like to thank Council for some of the 2023 highlights. Our Municipality is enriched by the contributions of persons with disabilities, and our community is strengthened when everyone is included. The AAC serves as a collaborative voice for Kincardine residents with various abilities. We are here to review site plans for private developments as well as Municipal facilities, and to identify barriers for people with disabilities. The AAC collaborates with Council and Staff, to overcome those barriers. The AAC is driven by volunteers with various experience supporting and advocating on behalf of persons with disabilities.

The purpose of our Delegation tonight is to:

- ❖ Thank Council on the endorsement of the City of London FADS;
- ❖ Thank Council for endorsing the Accessible Facility Audit for the Davidson Centre;
- ❖ Multi-Year Accessibility Plan-Catalogue of Issues for Budget Planning; and
- ❖ Present the AAC Accessibility 2024 Budget Priorities.

### **Use of City of London Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS)**

The AAC would like to thank Council for their endorsement and ongoing support, to use the City of London's FADS as the Municipality of Kincardine's FADS. This is a comprehensive, well researched document, to be used when renovating or building new Municipal facilities.

The FADS gives Council, Municipal Staff and the AAC clear direction to make Municipal facilities accessible.

## **Accessible Facility Audit for the Davidson Centre**

Another big thank you to Council for your support to have a facility audit completed on the Davidson Centre. On July 12, 2023, Julie Sawchuk from Sawchuk Accessibility Solutions performed a facility audit of the Davidson Centre. The AAC has recommended that her findings be added to the Multi Year Accessibility Plan – Catalogue of Issues.

Julie also provided training to the Committee and Staff, on performing future accessibility audits on other Municipal buildings. This was an excellent training session, which provided hands-on knowledge of making features accessible in a building.

Julie stressed the importance of all people, regardless of their ability, to be able to enter a Municipal facility and to be able to use the restrooms.

## **Multi Year Accessibility Plan - Catalogue of Issues for Budget Planning**

As a requirement in the AODA, the previous Committee, updated the Multi Year Accessibility Plan and the Catalogue of Issues, which was passed by Council in January 2023. The AAC would like Staff and Council to have the Catalogue of Issues on the radar when preparing budgets and developing plans for municipal facilities, and work towards removing some of the identified barriers noted in the Catalogue of Issues.

The current AAC will be working on updating the Catalogue of issues over the next year, to ensure Council and Staff have the most up to date information, when accessing municipal facilities. The AAC would like to thank Staff for their assistance and escorting us into the many Municipal buildings. Reinspecting all the facilities, keeps the document up-to-date, and therefore a useful tool for Staff to utilize.

There are many low hanging fruit identified in the Catalogue of Issues, the Committee would like to see as a priority moving forward.

## **Accessibility Advisory Committee's Priorities for the 2024 Budget**

With the goal of having all Municipal Facilities open to all people of Kincardine, the AAC has developed a list of priorities for projects for the 2024 Municipal Budget. The immediate goal is following Julie Sawchuk's principal to have access to all Municipal Buildings and be able to use the restrooms.

The AAC met on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and identified the following accessible projects for the 2024 budget:

- 1) Davidson Centre, Penetangore Room (former Old Seniors Room) accessible kitchen and washroom;
- 2) Request \$100,000 be allocated in the Budget, for accessibility projects;
- 3) Updating of all accessible parking spaces; and
- 4) Updating of all municipal crosswalks.

1) The Penetangore Room at the Davidson Centre is a priority for the AAC. The Davidson Centre is a very busy community building, and it is very important that we provide an accessible meeting space, where groups of all abilities can meet, use the kitchen, as well as the washroom.

2) The AAC would like Council to invest \$100,000 in the 2024 Municipal Budget, and subsequent budgets moving forward, to go towards accessibility projects in municipal facilities. The budget funds could be used in conjunction with staff and the AAC, to address operational items found in the Catalogue of Issues, as well as other projects included in capital projects that require additional funds to make a project accessible.

For example, in 2024 the AAC would like to Staff to focus on:

- ❖ Upgrade of washrooms and changerooms to meet FADS;
- ❖ Doorway widths and handles be updated to meet FADS;
- ❖ Consistent accessible signage in all Municipal facilities;
- ❖ Oversized garbage cans that impede accessible paths of travel, be replaced;
- ❖ Upgrade of accessible parking spaces as identified in item 3; and
- ❖ Upgrade of crosswalks, as identified in item 4.

3) An assessment of all the accessible parking spaces has been completed by the AAC. It was determined that many accessible spots need upgrades, to meet accessibility and the FADS. The Committee feels these spots should be brought up to standard as soon as practicable, to ensure that the spots meet the needs of the public.

4) The AAC feels that it is very important for all crosswalks in the Municipality, to be upgraded to meet the FADS. Safety of all pedestrians, especially those with varying abilities is important.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Municipality of Kincardine's Accessibility Advisory Committee is the voice of accessibility for our Municipality, and we advocate for those who cannot. Our goal is to advise Municipal Council and Staff to remove barriers in the Municipality of Kincardine. The AAC looks forward to the future and providing comments to make our Municipality barrier free for all.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kincardine Accessibility Advisory Committee

Sharon Woods, Chair

Scott McPherson, Vice Chair

Andrea Clarke, Deputy Mayor

Members: Bruce Edwards, Craig Roumey, Miranda Graham and Josh Easton

Tracey Guy, Staff Resource



Kitchen at the Penetangore Room at the Davidson Centre



Hallway leading to Penetangore Room and washroom entrances



Accessible Parking Space at the Underwood Community Centre



New crosswalk installed at Bruce Avenue at Princes Street