





WINDSOR ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Because access equals opportunity

November 25, 2014

Social Development Standing Committee

350 City Hall Square

Windsor Ontario

RE: Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee Report to Standing Committee

- The Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee has a wealth of knowledge and expertise when it comes to providing input and universally accessible solutions for new large scale projects. By consulting with the Committee early and regularly throughout the project many issues with barriers can be avoided or early and inexpensive solutions can be identified. Currently the Committee is involved with providing consultations for several important projects:
 - Working with Project manager/ Engineers on New City Hall Project to provide input and advice regarding accessibility
 - Working with Project managers/Engineers on Windsor Community Museum expansion to provide input and advice regarding accessibility
- Continued work with Engineering to provide input and advice on new curb ramp specifications for the City that meet accessibility needs and requirements. Including input and advice on specific projects (Walkerville Streetscaping).

- Working to increase accessible recreation options for the community. Already provided advice/funding for universally accessible gym equipment at Windsor Water World and accessible equipment for the aquatic centre and will be focused on expanding recreation opportunities for those with disabilities in the Windsor community.
- Working on ongoing training opportunities for the Corporation:
 - Over 440,000 Canadians have disabilities that affect their speech and / or their ability to understand what someone else is saying. This is an important area that can often be overlooked. WAAC worked with the Accessibility Officer to Co-ordinate training to enhance Accessible Customer Service for our customers with speech and language disabilities. Communication Access Now (CAN) is a national campaign to promote accessibility for people who have speech and language disabilities. CAN's goal is to improve accessibility to goods, services and opportunities for all people who have speech and language disabilities. Communication Access Now (CAN) training session scheduled for November 25 in Council Chambers. *Presenter: Tracy Shepherd, Regional Coordinator CAN Project*
 - Working on arranging details to host a speaker from Changing Minds, Changing Lives (during spring) which is a subcommittee of the Canadian Paralympics committee. It is a Program that educates key influencers in the lives of persons with a disability about parasport opportunities, the Paralympic movement, the associated social and health benefits of regular sport activity, and the potential that resides
- The Committee is a valuable resource for departments seeking information about how to make the services they are offering more accessible. Providing input and support regarding accessible elections.
- Accessible Transportation is an important accessibility issue. The Committee is exploring the need for more accessible taxis and has formed a subcommittee to explore further. They have opened up the lines of communication with the Supervisor of Licensing at a recent meeting and have committed to inviting Licensing back to an upcoming Committee meeting early next year to discuss whether a formal review is required.

- The Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee has been a strong supporter of the Face to Face job shadowing program, an initiative that is held during National Accessibility Awareness Week and is aimed at providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities who face employment barriers to gain experience and exposure in an employment setting within their community. Programs such as this provide a wonderful opportunity for the Corporation of the City of Windsor to reaffirm its dedication to employment equity and provide an opportunity to showcase the skills, abilities and education of individuals with disabilities and provide practical experience to employees within a variety of City Departments regarding the benefits of hiring and working alongside individuals with disabilities. WAAC has provided financial support as well as promoting a high level of corporate participation in Face to Face job shadowing program. Each year the City has increased its participation and this year the corporation hosted placements for 8 individuals in a number of departments throughout the City.

- The members of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee have a wealth of knowledge and expertise to offer regarding how to increase accessibility in facilities and services. The Committee continues to provide Accessibility audits which have resulted in significant accessibility improvements at the City. The Committee has now dedicated a subcommittee to conduct ongoing beneficial accessibility audits of City facilities to make the process more efficient.

