



TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 19, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

FreeSchools World Literacy Community Room and by Videoconference
Collingwood Public Library, First Floor, 55 Ste. Marie Street, Collingwood

Members Present: Sandra Grafe, Chair
Heather Grasman
Kathryn Bloomfield
Casey Morrison

Members Absent: Kelly Allen, Vice-Chair
Gina Northcott
Lana Roman

Staff Present: Julia Joseph, Accessibility Coordinator
Jennifer Battista, Administrative Assistant, Legislative Services

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Grasman called the meeting to order at 2:10pm

2. Adoption of the Agenda

AAC-005-2026

Moved by: Casey Morrison

Seconded by: Kathryn Bloomfield

THAT the content of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting agenda for Thursday, March 19, 2026, be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. Declarations of Pecuniary and/or Code of Conduct Conflict of Interests

None.

4. Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee held on Thursday, February 19, 2026, were approved electronically by the Committee and forwarded to Council for receipt at its next regular meeting.

5. Deputations

5.1 Update from BDO on 2026-2030 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Members from BDO gave an update on findings from consultations from people with disabilities and people on the Collingwood team.

It was noted that the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires that the Town has an Accessibility Plan and that it is renewed every 5 years and includes training for all employees.

The goal for the project was to learn more about the current state of accessibility in Collingwood and to provide recommendations that will lead to measurable outcomes. The next step is to use these findings to make a multi-year accessibility plan.

BDO provided a breakdown of stakeholder engagement including interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires.

Collingwood's key strengths were identified, including the Accessibility Coordinator role, Accessibility Advisory Committee, the website overhaul, inclusive recreation options, accessible transit infrastructure, and the Service Collingwood feedback channel.

Key themes from employees during the consultation process included a strong sense of commitment, the opportunity to improve training, physical infrastructure challenges and winter maintenance, visibility and awareness, and earlier integration.

Coordinator Joseph inquired if there were any specific requests regarding training and it was noted by the BDO that employees are looking for more role-specific training.

Key themes from the community included concern around transportation, winter maintenance, environment barriers, non-apparent disabilities, affordable and accessible housing challenges, and inconsistent accessibility experiences.

The BDO noted that they have recommendations for the different areas of the AODA. The first is Culture and the key recommendations in this area include establishing a Municipal Accessibility Governance Framework, integrate annual status reporting into council and budget planning cycles, establish an accessibility barrier tracking and prioritization process, and clarify and formalize AAC governance within the municipal structure.

Recommendations for Customer Service include enhancing technology and communication supports at the service counter, strengthen operational guidance and employee support, specialized training for inclusive recreation programming, and integrate customer service accessibility metrics into annual accessibility reporting.

Coordinator Joseph commented that since the BDO's last visit, the plexiglass at customer service at Town Hall has been removed and will be replaced with more accessible glass.

Chair Grafe commented that it's one thing to offer the recreation programs and services, but it's important to consider the timing that these are offered too and asked if this was considered. Members from the BDO noted that they spoke with the Aquatics team after speaking with the Committee, and times for the classes were picked based on availability and what was happening before and after the class to avoid sensory issues etc. and the reason for this may not have been communicated to the community.

Coordinator Joseph noted that staffing is an issue depending on the time of year and they don't want to advertise programs when they don't have staff to run it.

Key recommendations for Information and Communication include clarifying department level accountability for accessible communications, establish clear pre-publication accessibility standards, embed accessibility requirements to procurement and consultant agreements, and strengthen supported access and practical usability testing.

Key recommendations for Employment include formalizing a practical accommodation framework, provide role-specific manager training, workforce tracking, and strengthen inclusive recruitment and workplace design practices.

Key recommendations for Library Services are improving accessible arrival and pedestrian safety, implement library signage accessibility standards, adopt needs-led assistive technology planning, and communicate a clear service animal policy.

Key recommendations for Design of Public Spaces are to embed accessibility early in downtown and public realm planning, strengthen standards in winter maintenance contracts, develop phased accessible routes and crossing plan, and publish accessible trail and route maps

Key recommendations for Transportation include driver training in accessible communication, reporting to council, undertake a demand and capacity review, conduct an equity informed transit service review, and explore a standardized recognition and awareness program.

Coordinator Joseph asked if the feedback was what the BDO expected or was there anything surprising. Coordinator Joseph asked the Committee if the transit piece is how the Committee views it.

The Committee thanked the presenters. BDO members offered that the Committee can reach out again if there are any further questions or comments. Coordinator Joseph to provide contact information for BDO.

6. Business Arising from the Previous Meeting

6.1 Letter of recommendation to business owners (BIA/BDC)

Coordinator Joseph noted this was signed and sent and we are now waiting for a response.

6.2 Rick Hansen Foundation, Barrier Buster Grant – Application for Eddie Bush Memorial Arena

Coordinator Joseph confirmed the application has been submitted and is expecting to have responses by end of April.

6.3 National AccessAbility Week: Dates confirmed

There is confusion around the date as it is supposed to be the last Sunday of May, which is May 31. It is unclear if the week should be May 24-31 or May 31-June 7. After doing some research, Coordinator Joseph has found that some municipalities are making their own decision on which week to use. Coordinator Joseph stated that she has booked a spot at the Farmers Market for May 30.

6.4 2025 Status Report

The content of the status report was approved by the Committee and has been sent to department heads for approval. Once final confirmation is received, Coordinator Joseph will post this to the Town website which will fulfill their requirement of having an accessibility status report every year.

7. Reports

7.1 Service Feedback Report

Coordinator Joseph confirmed that there have been no formal feedback requests, which marks two months of no feedback requests. Coordinator Joseph highlighted that she received a phone call looking for clarification on an accessible parking pass and reminded the Committee of the regulations and by-laws surrounding an accessible parking pass.

8. Other Business

8.1 Terminals Point Project – Prepare for deputation from Adam Gallant, Project Manager, Town of Collingwood.

Project Manager Gallant is scheduled to come to the next meeting. Coordinator Joseph noted that Project Manager Gallant would like to know what the Committee would like to hear in this update. Coordinator Joseph asked the Committee to collect some thoughts and comments for the next meeting and advised members can send questions to her ahead of the next meeting. Coordinator Joseph shared the Engage Page.

8.2 Multi-Year Strategic Plan Areas of Focus

No updates

8.3 Town Projects / Community Engagement / Awareness

Coordinator Joseph shared that the Town of Collingwood has been recognized as a Silver Bicycle Community and that the Town is introducing two new seasonal e-newsletters to promote programs, events, etc.

8.4 Collaboration & Partnerships

No updates.

8.5 Other Business

Save the date – volunteer appreciation event

- April 22, 2026 - 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- Side Launch Brewing Company
- A formal invitation to RSVP will be sent out this month

9. Public Delegation(s) (Maximum 5 Minutes per Delegation)

None.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee will take place on Thursday, April 16, 2026, commencing at 2:00 p.m.

11. Adjournment

Moved: Member Grasman

THAT the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be hereby adjourned at 3:24pm. **CARRIED.**

Chair