



Committee Minutes

Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee September 14, 2022 – 1:30 PM

The Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee met on the above date electronically with the following members in attendance:

Present: Chair Catherine Sholtz; Councillor Dwight Burley; and Members Christina Schnell, Brooke Sillaby, Claudia Strel Locke

Regrets: Members Andrew Edgcumbe and Andy Underwood

Municipal Representatives:

Raylene Martell, Debbie Yip, and Krista House, Grey Highlands; Holly Malynyk, Township of Southgate; Carly Craig, Georgian Bluffs; Melissa Hilgendorff, Town of Hanover; Jen Patton, The Town of the Blue Mountains; Sile Ferguson, West Grey

Staff

Present: Kathie Nunno, Contract and Accessibility Coordinator; Rob Hatten, Communications Manager; Brad Fritz, Business Analyst Programmer; Natalie Mechalko, Trails and Forestry Coordinator; and Sarah Goldrup, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

Call to Order

Chair Scholtz called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Reports – Grey County

Progress on Website Update: Grey.ca – Verbal Update (Rob Hatten and Brad Fritz)

Rob Hatten presented an update on the progress of the County's website redevelopment and displayed some before and after comparisons for the Committee's

review and consideration. The presenter described efforts to reorganize content to improve the structure and navigation of the new site. Further, the presenter highlighted improved use of colour, contrast, images and icons, page structure, and adaptive page scaling. Rob Hatten then requested feedback on the user experience of interactive transit maps and timetables for those using assistive reading devices or software. Additionally, the presenter noted the County's use of new software called monsido to track and improve the accessibility of the County's website. Rob Hatten noted future opportunities for future testing for the new site.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff noted they would share questions about the potential transit discounts for individuals with disabilities with the Manager of Grey County Transit. Further, staff confirmed they would investigate reported issues accessing content within accordion dropdowns when using screen reading software.

Reports – Area Municipalities

Grey Highlands - Accessible Election Plan (Raylene Martell)

Raylene Martell presented the Grey Highlands Accessible Election Plan for the 2022 election to the Committee. The presenter described how the current plan had been informed by accessibility plans from past years and spoke to accessibility considerations outlined within the plan, including accessibility training and resources for staff and candidates.

In response to questions from the Committee, Raylene Martell discussed accessibility considerations for voting methods.

JAAC13-22 Moved by: Councillor Dwight

Seconded by: Christina Schnell

That the report from the Municipality of Grey Highlands dated September 2022, regarding the Accessible Election Plan be presented for review and comment.

Carried

Grey Highlands - Playground Equipment Replacement (Debbie Yip & Krista House)

Krista House presented to the Committee the playground equipment replacement for Eugenia Community Park and Feversham Park. The presenter confirmed the playground would be third-party certified and requested the Committee's feedback to ensure that the new playground would be accessible for all, noting community feedback on the opportunity to improve the location of the current swing set.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff explained that the ground cover would be a hard-packed engineered mulch. Kathie Nunno raised that a reference document attached to this meeting's package was specific to guidelines for accessible playgrounds.

The Committee heard comments from its members, noting considerations for accessible pathways and surfaces to and throughout the playground.

JAAC14-22 Moved by: Brooke Sillaby

Seconded by: Claudia Strel Locke

That the report “Municipality of Grey Highlands Playground Equipment Replacement (Eugenia Community Park and Feversham Park)” be received; and

That the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (GCJAAC) provide input for consideration for the installation of new play equipment.

Carried

Grey Highlands - Burnside Park Project (Debbie Yip & Krista House)

Debbie Yip presented to the Committee regarding the Burnside Park project. The presenter described the current state of the park and the plans to demolish the existing structure and reconstruct an accessible playground. Further, the presenter spoke about considerations for surfaces, navigation, accessible washroom facilities, and access to parking.

In response to questions from the Committee, Krista House confirmed accessible porta potties could be contracted through a vendor, and Debbie Yip spoke to considerations for lighting.

The Committee heard comments from its members regarding accessible tables and seating, the durability of ground surfaces, pathways and navigation, interactive elements at accessible levels of the play structure, and lighting.

JAAC15-22 Moved by: Councillor Burley

Seconded by: Claudia Strel Locke

That the report “Municipality of Grey Highlands Burnside Park Project be received; and

That the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (GCJAAC) provide input for consideration of accessibility.

Carried

Township of Southgate - Council Chambers Renovation (Holly Malynyk)

Holly Malynyk presented the Township of Southgate's recent Council Chambers renovation to the Committee. The presenter confirmed that the Township had undertaken the renovation to conform with the current building code and accessibility standards.

The Committee heard comments from its members recognizing the improvements undertaken and suggesting further considerations for automatic taps, soap, hand dryers, garbage cans without flaps, and paper towel dispensers in the bathroom. The members discussed the use of hand dryers and hygiene concerns. Further, members noted that the Township should wrap the pipe under the sink and review the height and placement of elements such as the mirror, taps, soap dispenser, paper towel dispenser, garbage can, and toilet paper dispenser in the bathroom.

JAAC16-22 Moved by: Christina Schnell

Seconded by: Claudia Strel Locke

That the report from the Township of Southgate dated August 31, 2022, regarding the Council Chambers Renovation be presented for review and comment.

Carried

Hanover Heritage Square Accessibility – Verbal Update (Melissa Hilgendorff)

Melissa Hilgendorff presented to the Committee regarding the Hanover Heritage Square accessibility improvements. The presenter reviewed the project's history and reported that Hanover Council had been receptive to the Committee's previous feedback. The presenter explained that Hanover Council had directed staff to investigate installing a concrete pathway from the boardwalk to the stage, a railing around the stage, and improving grading throughout the site so that visitors with mobility needs would no longer need a ramp to access the stage. Melissa Hilgendorff noted that staff would shortly report to Hanover Council with the suggested accessibility improvements.

The Committee heard comments from its members expressing their support for accessibility improvements that will benefit all users.

Reports – Grey County

Progress on Trails Improvements – Verbal Update (Natalie Mechalko)

Natalie Mechalko presented to the Committee regarding County trail improvements undertaken through the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative grant program. The presenter reviewed the projects undertaken through the grant, including trail clearing and resurfacing, improvements to signage and rest stops, digitization of the rail trail for future public-facing resources, and a comprehensive trail mapping project hosted on the Trailforks website and app.

In response to questions from the Committee, Natalie Mechalko spoke about efforts to improve trail etiquette and digitally document and map trail surfaces, slopes or elevations, and amenities to help residents and visitors plan their trips.

The Committee heard comments from its members regarding supporting all residents in exploring their communities and noted outdoor sports equipment and the need to document accessible trails, including information such as surface materials, grade or slope, and nearby amenities such as accessible bathrooms or available AEDs.

Kathie Nunno noted the opportunity to potentially integrate municipal mapping of accessible features with other maps such as trails.

CCR-JAAC-10-22 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027 (Kathie Nunno)

Kathie Nunno presented to the Committee regarding the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023-2027. The presenter described legislation requirements, the history of accessibility plans within the County, consultation with County Departments, and reflections on future advancements moving into a new term of Council. The presenter highlighted strategy elements, including updating the Committee's terms of reference, improvements during the hiring process, considerations for legislated requirements, and ongoing efforts to identify and remove barriers.

The Committee heard comments from its members on improving access to housing and food for those with disabilities and promoting services available to those with disabilities, such as transit options.

JAAC17-22 Moved by: Brooke Sillaby

Seconded by: Claudia Strelocke

That report CCR-JAAC-10-22 be received; and

That the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023 – 2027 be adopted as presented.

Carried

Other Business

There were no items of other business raised.

Next Meeting Dates

To be determined

On motion by Councillor Burley, the meeting adjourned at 2:58 PM.

Catherine Sholtz, Chair