



**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF GEORGINA**

Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2024
Time: 9:00 AM

Members of Committee Present: Wendy Busby
Charlene Biggerstaff
Lee Dale
Michelle Radigan-Marriott
Dave Harding

Members of Committee Absent: Scott Wollin

Staff Present: Cheyenne McAnuff, Records and Information
Coordinator
Bob Ferguson, Manager of Parks
Tim McClatchie, Manager of Facilities
Timothy Higgins, AODA Compliance Advisor

1. CALL TO ORDER

“The Town of Georgina recognizes and acknowledges that we are on lands originally used and occupied by the First Peoples of the Williams Treaties First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples, and on behalf of the Mayor and Council, we would like to thank them for sharing this land. We would also like to acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our close neighbour and friend, one with which we strive to build a cooperative and respectful relationship.

We also recognize the unique relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory. They are the water protectors and environmental stewards of these lands and we join them in these responsibilities.”

Called to Order at 9:00am

2. ROLL CALL

As noted above

3. INTRODUCTION OF ADDENDUM ITEM(S)

Item 11.4 2022 Committee Accomplishments is being pulled from the Agenda at this time as a comprehensive report will come to the Committee in Q1 of 2025 containing Committee accomplishments and directives for 2022, 2023, and 2024.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Charlene Biggerstaff joined the meeting at 9:02 am.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0044

Moved By Michelle Radigan-Marriott

Seconded By Charlene Biggerstaff

That the November 5, 2024 Agenda be approved as amended.

Carried

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None.

6. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of the October 1, 2024 Meeting

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0045

Moved By Dave Harding

Seconded By Wendy Busby

That the Minutes of the Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting held on October 1, 2024 be approved as presented.

Carried

7. SPEAKERS

1. Update on Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Tim Higgins, AODA Compliance Officer, to provide update on Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Staff are currently on track with the progress of developing the plan, especially with the development of a staff team to strengthen the governance of the Town and its accessible services. Staff have now developed a comprehensive framework to meet all legislative requirements including the AODA, Human Rights Code, and Ontario Building Code Act. Staff team will present their findings in mid-November,

and that will help shape the draft of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Important aspect of Georgina's reputation with respect to accessibility is the Town Website and the new accessibility enhancements. The Website shows outside communities, levels of government, etc. what the Town of Georgina is doing in regards to accessibility. Accessibility training is an area that will be developed in conjunction with the Plan. Staff have developed a survey instrument for public consultation, and staff are almost ready to implement it. Staff have been working with the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals for input in the creation of this survey, and are planning to hard launch the survey to the public in Q1 of 2025. In the meantime, staff will be doing a soft launch of the survey for key focus groups such as local business and organizations, the BIAs, Georgina Chamber of Commerce, and Georgina Public Library. This will give an opportunity for feedback, so that any changes and improvements can be made before the hard launch of the survey. The draft Plan will be presented to the Committee for endorsement before it is finalized before it is presented to Council.

Lee Dale: When we begin looking for feedback and community engagement, is there a list of organizations and businesses that would benefit from being part of this process?

Tim Higgins: Tentative list at this time, but Staff are confident in the organizations on the list.

Lee Dale: Is there a staff member to work with small business owners in terms of walking them through process and cost effectiveness, etc.

Tim Higgins: At a future time, staff and the Committee can discuss the merits of having a business or youth representative on the Committee as a non-voting member to offer valuable perspectives.

Michelle: Attended the staff workshop and was impressed with the attendance and the content of the workshop, commending staff on their work.

Tim Higgins: One of the goals of the workshop was team building, and from feedback, it was a huge success and informative of the Multi-Year Plan.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0046

Moved By Charlene Biggerstaff
Seconded By Michelle Radigan-Marriott

That the update on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, presented by Tim Higgins, be received.

Carried

8. DELEGATIONS/ PETITIONS

None.

9. PRESENTATIONS

None.

10. REPORTS

1. West Park Playground

Bob Ferguson, Manager of Parks, to provide verbal update on the accessibility improvements to the playground at West Park.

Lee Dale stepped down as Chair, Charlene Biggerstaff assumed role as Chair, for Item 10.1 West Park Playground.

Previously, playgrounds were put in the middle of the park without thought of how accessible the location is. Now, playground equipment is placed closer to sidewalks and parking spaces in new parks to ensure accessibility. When replacing playground equipment, staff are ensuring that there is access from the curb/sidewalk directly to the playground. Each new/replacement playground has a minimum of 3-5 ground-mounted accessible features and 3-5 elevated accessible features, as well as an accessible swing. Developers also take colour palettes, sensory items, and quiet zones into consideration. There are also features like talking tubes and two-sided panels so that children can interact with each other no matter their differences in needs. With West Park, the accessibility features include a talking tube and accessible swing.

Lee Dale: Is there an accessibility swing in each new playground, or is that looked at on a case by case basis?

Bob Ferguson: It is now a standard that any playground that is new or is being replaced that already has a swing set structure will have an accessible swing. For small playgrounds without an existing structure, it is the hope to be able to add a structure with an accessible swing, but would have to be looked at on an individual level. Currently there are only two small playgrounds without an existing swing structure.

Lee Dale: Is there a timeline for the completion of these two projects?

Bob Ferguson: Both site preps have been done, all curbing and drainage installed. They will be in West Park for installation on Monday, November 11, and as soon as they are done with that site, they will be moving to Udora.

Dave Harding: Are there staff who regularly do checks on the playgrounds?

Bob Ferguson: Yes, Staff are required to do visual checks on playgrounds once a week, and a detailed inspection of all playground equipment once a month to check for pinch points, protrusions, shake-rattle-and-roll tests, etc. The detailed inspection takes around 3 hours and are fully documented.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0047

Moved By Michelle Radigan-Marriott
Seconded By Lee Dale

That the verbal report on West Park Playground, presented by Bob Ferguson, be received.

Carried

2. Udora Park Playground

Bob Ferguson, Manager of Parks, to provide verbal update on the accessibility improvements to the playground at Udora Park.

Charlene Biggerstaff stepped down as Chair, Lee Dale resumed role as Chair for duration of meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0048

Moved By Charlene Biggerstaff
Seconded By Dave Harding

That the verbal report on Udora Park Playground, presented by Bob Ferguson, be received.

Carried

11. GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

1. 2025 Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule

Committee concerned with November 11 and December 16 meeting dates, shifting back by one week so that the November meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, and the December meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2025.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0049

Moved By Wendy Busby
Seconded By Dave Harding

That the 2025 Georgina Accessibility Advisory Committee Schedule be approved as amended.

Carried

2. 2025 Work Planning Session

Committee to discuss goals for the upcoming year.

Wendy Busby: Accessibility issues with the Pefferlaw Ice Pad. Currently there is a step of around 4 inches to be able to get in and out of the sport zone, and there is no accessible entrance onto the ice or the floor, depending on the time of year.

Bob Ferguson: Staff will continue discussion to look at accessible options. There has been discussion of having ramp access on both sides of the door, and also ensuring that the door is wide enough to accommodate assistive devices.

Dave Harding: When the design was first created, the original intention was for hockey and skating, and the size of the boards are not large enough to accommodate assistive devices. As the PIP has now expanded to be a sport zone all year, it is important to consider being more inclusive to those with accessibility needs.

Wendy Busby: Are there any plans to update some parks to make the path to the playground equipment more accessible? For example, it is difficult for those with strollers or wheelchairs to navigate Holmes Point Beach park.

Bob Ferguson: Yes, all 26 playgrounds are looked at and there is a replacement cycle for equipment and when that renewal comes up, staff are looking at adding in accessible features.

Councillor Biggerstaff: Partner with Y-Space and/or Georgina Chamber of Commerce, BIAs to help local businesses understand AODA, especially from a marketing, website, and services lens. Staff could help with bringing awareness to businesses and help them reach compliance with AODA.

Ice Palace elevator cannot be used unless staff uses a key, which causes a delay when trying to locate staff in the facility in order to use the elevator. Is there a way to use a buzzer or a bell to have staff arrive quickly? That would be one less barrier to accessible transportation.

Staff are currently developing a Parks and Trails Master Plan, is there any update on the timeline and next steps?

Bob Ferguson: The Parks and Trails Master Plan should be coming forward in Q1 of 2025, the first draft is complete. O&I also has a Trails and Active Transportation Plan that they are looking to complete in 2025, which will compliment the Parks and Trails Master Plan.

Michelle Radigan-Marriott: Barriers to accessibility in local businesses are more from a lack of knowledge and awareness, as well as a lack of funding. There is an organization called Stop Gap that makes portable ramps for businesses, at a cost of around \$300-\$450 per ramp. This may be something to discuss with the Chamber of Commerce to get the information out to local businesses.

In agreement with Councillor Biggerstaff's comments on the Ice Palace elevator, and in favour of a buzzer in order to lessen travel to find staff.

Tim McClatchie: Staff are now carrying cell phones, so that the public can access them more quickly. It may be beneficial to post the cell number at the elevator for the public to contact staff, as staff may not be in the vicinity of the elevator to be able to hear a buzzer.

Dave Harding: What are the regulations with the elevator during an emergency in terms of contacting staff and waiting?

Councillor Dale: One goal is to look at accessibility through an Autism spectrum and sensory lens and ensuring that programming and facilities are accessible to all.

It would also be beneficial to provide a generalized accessibility survey that is available online and in all Town facilities to remain open and consistently monitored for any comments and concerns from the public so that they can be addressed.

Michelle Radigan-Marriott: In terms of the Ice Palace elevator, it is not always possible for those with disabilities to use a cell phone, and also may not always have a caregiver with them to assist.

In terms winter sports, how can we make winter activities like tubing at the ROC more accessible? Staff are accommodating, but it is on an as-needed basis, not a standard.

We can have local organizations like Deaf-Blind, Community Living, Austism Unplugged, etc. come and present to the Committee on what they do and how the Committee can assist.

Request to have Communication staff attend to do a workshop on accessible emails and documents, and best practices.

Councillor Dale: Can staff provide the elevator policy/regulations for the Committee to review and provide answers to any questions the Committee might have?

Tim McClatchie to provide the policy.

Tim Higgins: Staff will investigate keeping the survey portal open for continuous feedback and creating physical copies of the survey to be made available in Town facilities.

Michelle Radigan-Marriott: Can the Committee review the survey before it is made available to the public?

Tim Higgins: The survey is in a soft launch currently, and staff will be providing it to the Committee for review and input before it is hard launched to the public.

Michelle Radigan-Marriott: Can we get an update on reviewing site plans and what the process is?

Tim Higgins: Reviewing site plans is a responsibility of the Committee, and moving forward staff should develop a process and assign a Development Services staff liaison to bring forward site plans for Committee review and comment.

Dave Harding left the meeting at 10:09 am.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0050

Moved By Wendy Busby

Seconded By Charlene Biggerstaff

That the discussion regarding the 2025 Work Planning Session be received and endorsed by GAAC.

Carried

3. Disposition Item Surrounding Endorsement of AODA Enhancements at Town Parks

Memo appeared before Council at the October 30, 2024 meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0051

Moved By Michelle Radigan-Marriott

Seconded By Charlene Biggerstaff

That the Disposition Item Surrounding Endorsement of AODA be received.

Carried

4. 2022 Committee Accomplishments

Michelle Radigan-Marriott prepared the 2022 GAAC Accomplishments document for Committee endorsement to send to Council.

12. MOTIONS/ NOTICES OF MOTION

None

13. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. CLOSED SESSION

None.

15. MOTION TO ADJOURN

RESOLUTION NO. GAAC2024-0052

Moved By Charlene Biggerstaff

Seconded By Michelle Radigan-Marriott

That the meeting adjourn at 10:34am.

Carried

Councillor Lee Dale, Chair

Cheyenne McAnuff, Records and Information Coordinator