

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AUGUST 19, 2002

ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Recommendation

The City Clerk in consultation with the Commissioner of Planning and the Director of Legal Services recommends:

- 1) That the City of Vaughan establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee;
- 2) That the City Clerk be directed to advertise for members to sit on the Committee and to liaise with organizations serving and representing disabled persons in the community for the purpose of soliciting membership on the Committee: and
- 3) That staff be directed to report on a mandate and operating procedure for the Committee and report further in the Fall 2002 regarding other requirements of the Act.

Purpose

The Province on June 26, 2002 proclaimed sections 11 and 12 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (the Act) to be in effect September 30, 2002. This section requires municipalities to prepare an accessibility plan each year and where there are 10,000 or more residents to establish Accessibility Advisory Committees as required by the Act. The purpose of this report is to seek a Council directive to advertise for persons qualified to be considered for membership on the Committee.

Background - Analysis and Options

The purpose of the Act is to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in life in the Province of Ontario. The legislation defines barriers as anything that prevents full participation in all aspects of society due to a disability including: physical or architectural barriers, information or communication barriers, attitudinal barriers, technological barriers, policies or practices. A disability covered by the legislation includes a physical disability, defect, illness, muteness, reliance on a device or a guide dog, a learning disability, a mental impairment, a mental disorder, or an injury or disability for which WSIB benefits are received, etc.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Council is required to prepare an Accessibility Plan to address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in the municipality's bylaws, policies, programs, practices and services. The Accessibility Plan shall include:

1. A report on the measures taken to remove barriers.
2. A report on the measures in place to ensure the municipality assesses its actions to determine their effect on persons with disabilities.
3. A list of the bylaws, policies, programs, practices and services that the municipality will review in the upcoming year to identify barriers.
4. A report on the measures that the municipality will undertake in the upcoming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers.

5. Other information as may be required by provincial regulations.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Council is required to appoint an Accessibility Advisory Committee, which shall:

1. Have a majority of members who are persons with disabilities.
2. Be responsible to advise Council each year regarding the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its Accessibility Plan.
3. Review in a timely manner, the site plans, drawings approved by the City under section 41 of the Planning Act. The committee selects which drawings it will review.
4. Perform other functions as specified in the provincial regulations.

Conclusion

In order to establish the required Accessibility Advisory Committee by the end of September it is necessary to advertise and seek persons qualified to be appointed to the Committee immediately. In addition a further report is required to address the mandate and operating procedures for the Committee. The further report will also address other changes required by the legislation.

Attachments

None

Report prepared by:

John D. Leach

Respectfully submitted,

John D. Leach
City Clerk