



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA

AAC 2-2025

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

4:30 p.m.

Meeting will be held by electronic participation only

If you are interested in viewing this meeting or would like to speak to an item listed on the agenda please contact the Office of the Regional Clerk at clerk@niagararegion.ca.

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT</u>	
3. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
4. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>	
4.1 <u>Niagara Transit Multi-Year Accessibility Plan</u> Janany Ragunathan, Project Manager, Kaila Hunte, Public Engagement and Accessibility Planning Resource, Cara Wilkie, Legal and Policy SME, and Yuval Grinspun, Project Director, Left Turn, Right Turn	3 - 11
4.2 <u>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan</u> Cassie Ogunniyi, Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations	12 - 23
5. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
6. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	
7. <u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>	
7.1 <u>AAC-C 2-2025</u> Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Q1 Progress Update	24 - 29
7.2 <u>AAC 4-2024</u> Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - October 22, 2024	30 - 32

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at a time to be determined.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or accessibility@niagararegion.ca (email).



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Introduction to the project

Niagara Transit
April 29th, 2025

Prepared by Left Turn Right Turn Ltd

Agenda



Introductions



About the Project



What is a MYAP?



Discussion



Consultation Next Steps

Introductions



Janany Ragunathan
Project Manager



Kaila Hunte
Public Engagement and
Accessibility Planning
Resource



Cara Wilkie
Legal and Policy
SME



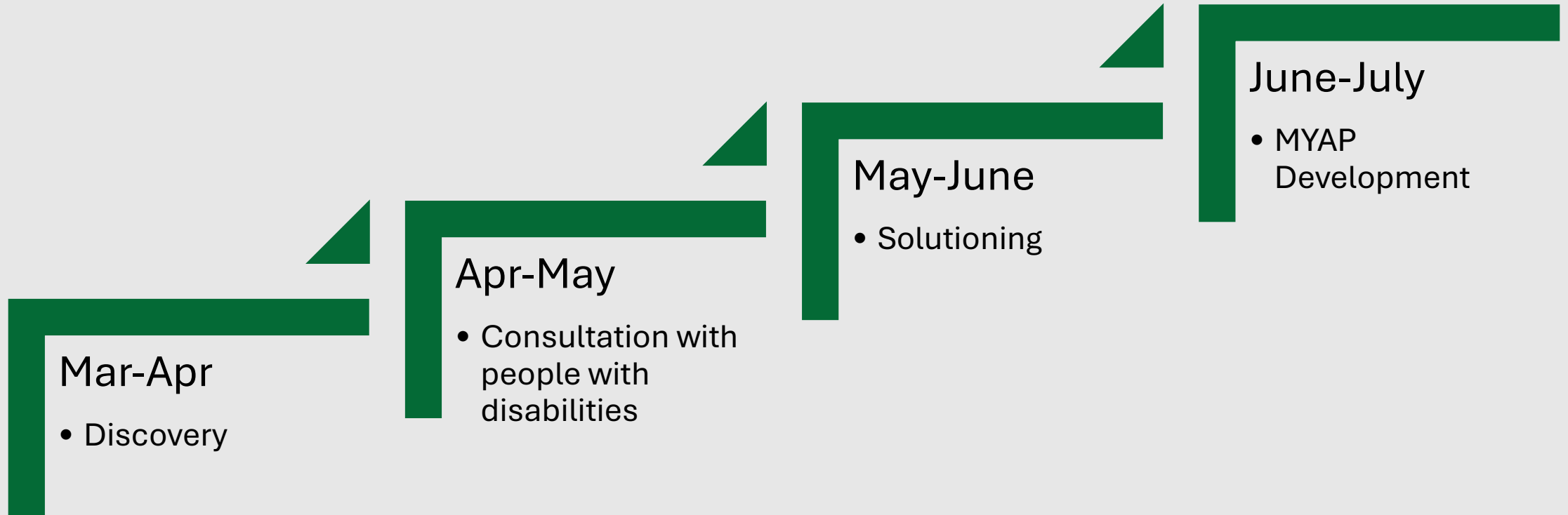
Yuval Grinspun
Project Director

About the Project

Objective: Develop Niagara Transit's first MYAP

- Reflect the needs and priorities of community members
- Develop a pragmatic and principled pathway to improve accessibility of public transit in the Niagara Region
- Comply with obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Timelines



So, what is a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)?

- The MYAP covers conventional and specialized transit and accessibility within the organization itself (e.g. customer service, employment, technology).
- Outlines an organization's strategy to “prevent and remove barriers” to accessibility
- Plans are required to be developed in consultation with people with disabilities.

Discussion

What feedback has been shared regarding the accessibility of public transit in the region?

Do you have suggestions for specific advocacy or service organizations that we should reach out to during this process?

What have your experiences using transit in the region been like? Have you or someone close to you experienced barriers in the service?

Next Steps in the Consultation Process

- Three (3) two-hour pop-up engagements (tentative locations)
 - St. Catharines Downtown Bus Terminal
 - Welland Bus Terminal
 - Morrison/Dorchester Hub (Niagara Falls)
- Consultations with local disability advocacy and service organizations
- Incorporating feedback into the upcoming MYAP

A thick dark green vertical line is positioned on the left side of the slide. To its right, a large, light grey arrow points diagonally upwards and to the right.

Thank you!

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan

Cassie Ogunniyi

Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations

Outline

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan Updates
- Accessibility Week 2025
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Handbook

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2024 Updates

- Plan has 38 per cent completion rate
- 31 employees recognized through CERT Award
- 3 Niagara DEI Community of Practice meetings
- 80 per cent of staff completed DEI Fundamentals Training
- 96 per cent of People Leaders completed Inclusive Leadership
- Calendar of Significant Dates
 - 247 dates in monthly summaries
 - 45 spotlight dates

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2025

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Handbook
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion learning for all staff
- Implement best practices to eliminate barriers in recruitment and hiring processes.
- Work with Region staff to recognize and showcase significant dates.
- Review DEI Action Plan

Spotlight – Accessibility Week

- Two Awareness Events each year
- Accessibility Week – May 25 to 30
- Niagara host Ontario ParaSport Games – May 30 to June 1
- Alzheimer's Society – interactive education
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- AAC member presentation

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Handbook

- Development of DEI Handbook
 - One of the action items in DEI Action Plan (2023-2027)
 - Aim to complete handbook by end of 2025
- Purpose
 - Practical resource to support Regional Staff
 - Two parts with eleven chapters
- Main audience is internal staff

Chapter Structure

- Overview
- Niagara Region Context
- Incorporating DEI in the topic area
- Chapter Summary
 - Check lists
 - Scenarios

Table of Contents – Part One Creating an Inclusive Workplace

1. Introduction
2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fundamentals
3. Inclusive Workplace Culture
4. Being a People Leader
5. Recruitment and Hiring

Table of Contents – Part Two Inclusive Programs, Plans, and Policies

1. Gender Based Analysis Plus
2. Inclusive Communication
3. Community Engagement
4. Data Collection and Management
5. Policy Development and Review
6. Creating Plans, Programs, or Projects

Gender Based Analysis Plus

Five Steps

1. Identify the issue and understand the context
2. Gather the facts
3. Develop options and make recommendations
4. Communicate
5. Monitor and evaluate

Next Steps

- DEI team finalize the draft of the handbook
- Internal staff review and finalize
- Ensure AODA compliant
- Handbook is made available to staff

Thank You!

Cassie Ogunniyi

Diversity@niagararegion.ca

Memorandum

AAC-C 2-2025

Subject: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Q1 Progress Update

Date: April 29, 2025

To: Accessibility Advisory Committee

From: Tammy Dumas, Accessibility Advisor

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) progress update to the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

Background Information

The 2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) is the result of collaborative efforts between Niagara Region and people of all abilities across Niagara. The MYAP was endorsed by the Niagara Region Accessibility Advisory Committee on October 22, 2024, and received at the meeting of Regional Council on December 12, 2024.

A requirement of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, the MYAP is the Region's roadmap to improve accessibility to Regional programs and services. The MYAP identifies 31 actions in 6 focus areas, including General Requirements, Customer Service, Employment, Design of Public Spaces and Transportation. These actions will guide staff in the prevention and removal of barriers over the next five years.

Update Summary

At the end of March 2025, we are pleased to report that our progress rate for the MYAP is on track at 26 percent. Of the 31 action items and related activities, 6 percent are complete, 42 percent are on track and in progress and 52 percent are actions that are upcoming.

The 2024-2029 Accessibility Plan Q1 Progress Update is attached.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Tammy Dumas, Accessibility Advisor

Attachments: 2024-2029 Accessibility Plan Q1 Progress Update

2024-2029 Accessibility Plan Q1 Progress Update

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting
April 29, 2025

Introduction

The 2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) is the result of collaborative efforts between Niagara Region and people of all abilities across Niagara.

A requirement of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, the MYAP is the Region's roadmap to improve accessibility to Regional programs and services. The MYAP identifies 31 actions in 6 focus areas, including General Requirements, Customer Service, Employment, Design of Public Spaces and Transportation. These actions will guide staff in the prevention and removal of barriers over the next five years.

At the end of March 2025, our progress rate for the MYAP is on track at 26 percent. Of the 31 action items and related activities, 6 percent are complete, and 42 percent are on track and in progress. This report provides an overview of the MYAP progress to date.

Focus Area 1: General Requirements

1.1 Accessibility plan and policies.

Update the Region's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP).

The 2024-2029 MYAP was completed following community consultations in 2024. endorsed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee and approved by Regional Council in 2024.

Develop and adopt a digital accessibility policy to enhance the accessibility and usability of web-based services and information for all users.

Environmental scan of digital and web accessibility policies, across municipal and large organizations, conducted to inform corporate policy development.

1.2 Training Processes

Coordinate procedures for corporate training on AODA.

Training for staff in corporate learning management system has been updated with new provincial training modules on AODA. A new in-person quarterly training schedule, and related materials, for document accessibility has been developed and implemented for staff.

Centralize AODA training completion data for employees, volunteers and contractors.

Centralized location for staff AODA training data established. Training data available through human resource staff upon request.

Focus Area 2: Customer Service Barriers

2.2 Staff Training

Expand training for staff, volunteers and consultants on disability, assistive devices, accessibility barriers, accessibility supports and accessibility legislation.

New provincial training on the AODA and the Customer Service Standard available on corporate learning management system. Introduction to the AODA incorporated into staff document accessibility training materials. Accessibility and disability related training provided across departments.

Focus Area 3: Information and Communication Barriers

3.2 Accessible Information

Ensure all corporate and departmental websites, social media and applications meet or exceed Web Content Accessible Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA.

Web accessibility audits of all corporate websites started to identify existing digital information barriers.

Establish consistent web auditing and internal reporting processes across departments.

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Access Labs retained to conduct corporate web accessibility audits including automated, manual, and lived experience testing. Internal compliance reporting processes continue to be improved.

Continue to develop and coordinate web and document accessibility training for staff.

Document accessibility info sheet (table topper) and quarterly in-person training sessions developed for staff on word, powerpoint, excel and adobe.

Establish a digital accessibility sub-group of the staff accessibility working group.

Key staff engaged to inform digital accessibility efforts.

Focus Area 4: Employment Barriers

4.1 Recruitment, Hiring and Accommodations

Develop and implement corporate DEI resources and practices to ensure barrier free hiring and recruitment practices and an inclusive and welcoming workplace.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) e-learning training modules for staff and people leaders developed and delivered. Interview question bank created to support inclusive hiring.

Strengthen communication processes with applicants and employees to ensure they are aware of available disability accommodations and related procedures.

Employee equity statement developed for Regional job postings.

Focus Area 5: Public Space Barriers

5.1 Accessible Facilities Project

Complete the necessary accessible design upgrades identified in phases one and two of the Accessible Facilities Project (AFP).

In phases one and two of the AFP, 56 percent of Regional facilities were audited for accessibility barriers. Accessible washroom upgrades at eight Regional locations have been planned.

Continue phases three and four of the AFP. Conduct accessibility assessments on all remaining Regional facilities.

Accessibility audits complete on 84 percent of Regional facilities, including 21 EMS locations.

Develop plans to remove identified access barriers.

Plans developed to remediate accessibility barriers, where possible, identified in the third phase of building accessibility audits.

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**AAC 4-2024
Tuesday, October 22, 2024
Meeting held by electronic participation**

Committee: Councillor Bateman (Committee Chair), L. Hay (Committee Vice-Chair), V. Leitch, N. Qureshi, D. Whipple

Absent/Regrets: M. Abdelmaksoud, A. Hernandez, S. Howe, R. Walker

Staff: T. Dumas, Accessibility Advisor, K. Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, S. Madder, Manager, Corporate Strategy, Growth Strategy and Economic Development, N. Menard, Senior Project Manager, Facilities, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, A. Stea, Director, Corporate Strategy & Community Sustainability

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Bateman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Committee Chair Bateman read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 NRPS 911 Back-Up Facility - Accessible Design Implementation

Nicole Menard, Senior Project Manager, Construction, Energy and Facilities Management, provided information respecting Niagara Region Police Service 911 Back Up. Topics of the presentation included:

- Project Description
- Location - Site Plan
- Site Accessibility Overview
- Facility Accessibility Overview

5. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 AAC-C 3-2024
2024 - 2029 Draft Accessibility Plan

Moved by N. Qureshi
Seconded by D. Whipple

That Memorandum AAC-C 3-2024, dated October 22, 2024, respecting
2024 – 2029 Draft Accessibility Plan, **BE RECEIVED**; and

That the 2024 – 2029 Draft Accessibility Plan **BE ENDORSED** by the
Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Carried

6.2 AAC-C 4-2024
2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Dates

Moved by D. Whipple
Seconded by N. Qureshi

That Memorandum AAC-C 4-2024, dated October 22, 2024, respecting
2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Dates, **BE RECEIVED**;
and

That the Accessibility Advisory Committee meetings **BE HELD** on
Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. on the following dates in 2025:

January 21, April 29, July 22 and October 21.

Carried

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by V. Leitch
Seconded by D. Whipple

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

AAC 1-2024
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2024

AAC 2-2024
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – April 23, 2024

Carried

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Linda Hunt, Councillor, City of Brantford

Committee Chair Bateman introduced Linda Hunt, Councillor, City of Brantford, who provided an overview of her advocacy for accessibility efforts and shared her experience of being the first person with a physical disability to be elected as a Brantford City Councillor.

At 2:32 p.m., Committee Chair Bateman advised Committee members that pursuant to Section 22.12 of the Procedural By-law 120-2010, as amended, that as quorum was lost during the meeting and was not regained within fifteen minutes, the meeting would stand adjourned until the date of the next meeting.

Councillor Bateman
Committee Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Deputy Clerk

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk