



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA

AAC 2-2024

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

1:00 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 Region 2024-2029 Accessibility Plan - Community Engagement - What We've Heard</u> Zoie Browne, Project Manager, and Amitai Zand, Digital Engagement Specialist, LURA Consulting	3 - 30
4.2 <u>Introduction to Niagara Transit Commission's Transit Master Planning Project</u> Yuval Grinspun, Principal, and Pia Dimayuga, Transit Innovator, Left Turn Right Turn (LTRT)	31 - 41
5. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
6. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u> None.	

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 AAC 1-2024

42 - 44

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - January 23, 2024

8. OTHER BUSINESS

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

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).

Niagara Region Accessibility Engagement Overview

Accessibility Advisory Committee
April 23, 2024

Tammy Dumas, Accessibility Advisor

Niagara Region 2024-2029 Accessibility Plan

Community Engagement – What We've Heard

Community Engagement on Accessibility

- Niagara Region is currently updating its **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)**
- To remove barriers to Regional services for people with disabilities
- In alignment with:
 - Regional Council's Strategic Priority of an **Equitable Region**
 - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Community engagement activities - January to June 2024

Purpose and Process

- Seeking feedback about the accessibility of regional services/facilities
- Project information shared internally and externally via:
 - Email blasts to over 150 community organizations to share with their networks
 - Over 1,900 project postcards delivered across Niagara
 - New project webpage on niagararegion.ca
 - Social media and internal Vine site

Focus of Engagement

- Questions were designed to hear about people's experiences and/or access barriers related to the AODA Accessibility Standards:
 - Customer Service
 - Information and Communication
 - Employment
 - Transportation
 - Design of Public Spaces

Activities and Interactions



547 connections to date



3 in person sessions

March 4 – March 5, 2024

Fonthill, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines



Survey

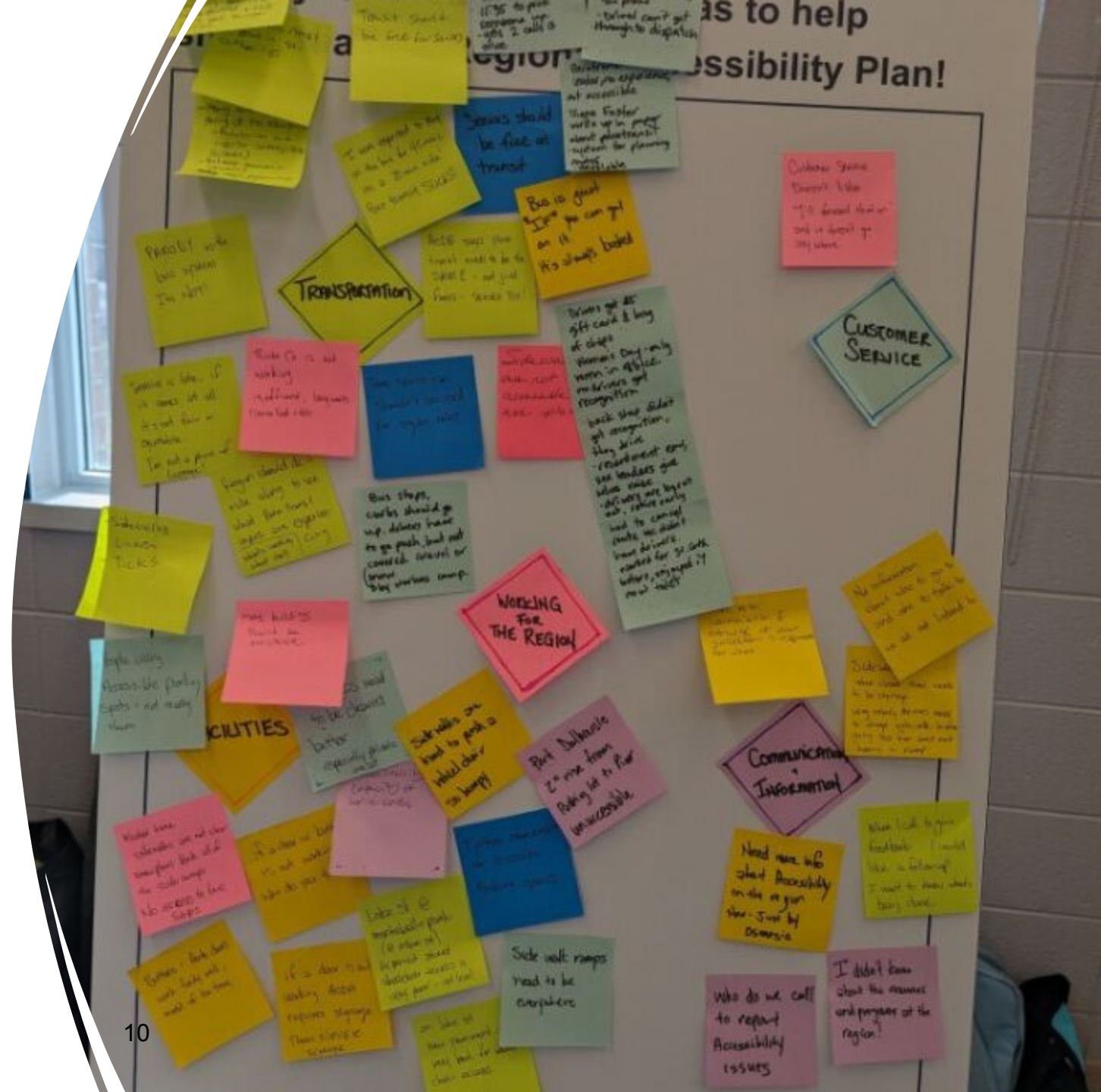
February 26 – March 22, 2024

Digital and paper

Who We Heard From

- **Residents from all 12 area municipalities provided feedback**
 - Most respondents from St. Catharines, Welland, Port Colborne, Niagara Falls, or Thorold
 - 60% of survey respondents provided demographic information
- **48% identified as having a disability or chronic health concern**
 - Most reported were chronic illness/pain, mobility, mental health, coordination and dexterity
- **50% of respondents identified as age 20-49**

What We Heard



Transportation



Regional Transportation

- Parking spaces – large enough and close to entrances
- Stricter enforcement for accessible parking spaces
- Tactile paving for safety and multisensory technology
- Ensure sidewalks and curb ramps are well-maintained – especially in winter

Transit

- Not part of the Region's MYAP
- Niagara Region Transit will be preparing its own 5-year Accessibility Plan
- Feedback received as part of this consultation will be shared with NRT
- Transit feedback included:
 - Capacity and Service Routes
 - Customer Service, Booking, and Information
 - Physical Accessibility of Vehicles and Stops

Customer Service



Staffing

- Training on AODA - the needs of, and interacting with, people with disabilities
- More staff who speak languages other than English
- Designated in-person point of contact for all services/departments

Standards and Service

Beyond AODA

- Accessibility is multi-dimensional - go beyond the minimum AODA standards
- Provide different types of socially supportive programs

Service Accessibility

- Accessible online versions or other accessible formats for all programs

Information and Communications



Accessible, Timely, Transparent Communication

- Transparent, two-way communication and proactive outreach to disability communities
- Make information about programs and services consistent, easy to access
- Update website
- Implement automatic renewals to reduce administrative burden
- Process requests/monetary reimbursements within a reasonable timeline

Signage

- Create signage that is clear and accessible
- Consistent branding
- Signage near automatic doors when they are out of order
- Signage for accessible detour routes when sidewalks are closed

Public Spaces



Regional Buildings & Facilities

- Enhance physical accessibility (i.e., elevators, automatic doors and opener buttons that are within reach, ramps on all sidewalks and curbs, and large washrooms)
- Trails and paths – welcoming, physically accessible to all
- Regional spaces should be designated scent free
- Rest areas in public spaces for those who experience overstimulation



Employment

Recruitment and Applications

- Hiring policies to promote inclusion
- Offer more accessibility accommodations during the hiring process – physically and virtually
- Provide clear directions on application process and who to contact
- Ensure job postings adhere to AODA guidelines

Interviews

- Provide clear directions on how to request accommodations (at any stage of process)
- Proactively disclose potential accessibility barriers in the workplace
- Support potential candidates with developmental disabilities by considering different interview styles

Hiring Decisions

- Consider, value, and accept lived experiences equally to conventional educational experience
- Follow policies and laws against discrimination when making hiring decisions
- Provide training for hiring managers to ensure an inclusive hiring process

Employee Support

- Sponsor or organize opportunities for professional networking amongst the disability and accessibility community
- Actively solicit employee feedback on accessibility and encourage reflections on accessibility and diversity

Other feedback

Other Feedback

- Equitable housing is also a foundational cornerstone of a high quality of life for all
- Maintain strong relationships with other governments, social service and health providers and accessibility and disability organizations across Niagara

Accessibility Plan - Next Steps



May

Virtual community
engagement
session



June

Draft engagement
report complete



July - Sept.

Draft 2024-2029
Accessibility Plan



Oct. - Dec.

Reviews and
approvals

Discussion

Is anything missing?

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces



Niagara Transit Commission

Transit Master Planning Project

Introduction to Accessibility Advisory Committee
April 23, 2024

NIAGARA

EVERYONE WELCOME

Introductions

Project Team



32



Pia Dimayuga
Engagement Lead and
Accessibility Lead



**Yuval
Grinspun**
Project Manager



Matt Lattavo
Deputy Project
Manager

2

Agenda

- Project introduction
- Plan for public engagement
- Plan for committee involvement
- Next steps
- Questions

Transit Facilities, Strategic Assets & Service Network Master Plan

- Transit services across the Niagara region and 12 municipalities were consolidated and combined on January 1, 2023
- This plan is the first master plan for transit since the start of the new Niagara Region Transit
- **Objective:** Create a bold vision for what an integrated regional transit could look like and how it can meet all resident needs

Project Timelines



Facilities, Assets and Service Network Master Plan											
Condensed Work Plan and Schedule					Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025
Task ID	Task										
- A -	Project Management										
- B -	Communications & Engagement										
	Stakeholder and Public Engagement										
- C -	Context-Setting										
- D -	Transit Assets and Facilities										
- E -	Transit Service Network										
- F -	Implementation Planning										
- G -	Reporting and Presentations										

Why are we engaging and when?



Round 1: NTC Today and Tomorrow

- Understand current perspectives on NTC
- Receive input and guidance on future priorities
- Q2 2024

Round 2: Exploring Possibilities

- Share potential future concepts (network and services)
- Receive feedback
- Q4 2024

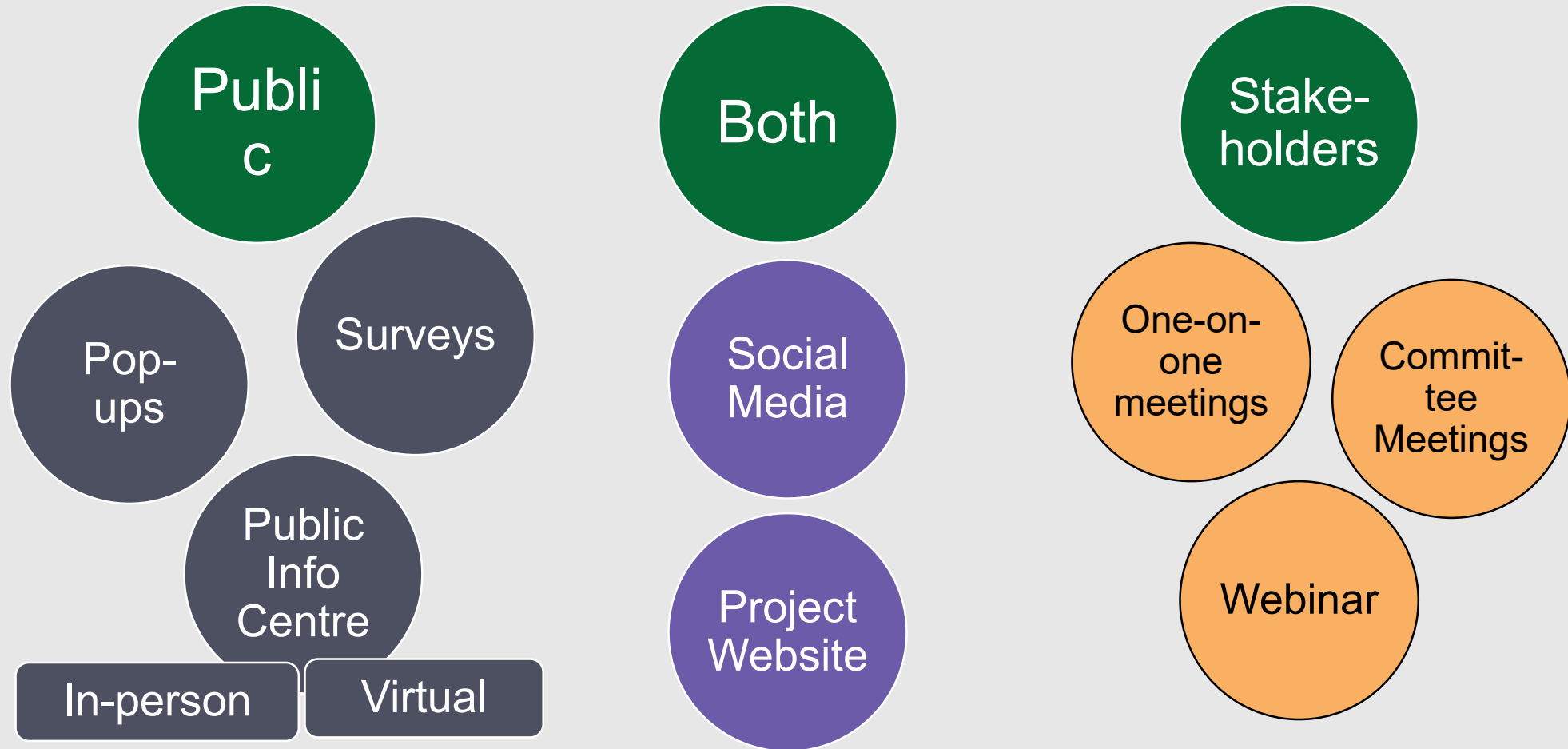
Round 3: Feedback on the Plan

- Share draft plan publicly
- Receive feedback
- Q2 2025

Who are we engaging?

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- NTC Public Advisory Committee
- Member Municipalities
- Post-Secondary Institutions
- Local Health Units and Medical Institutions
- Local and Regional Chambers of Commerce
- Economic Development's Community Leader Group
- Members of the public

How will we engage?



When will we engage with the committee?



Round 1: NTC Today and Tomorrow

- Q2 2024

Round 2: Exploring Possibilities

- Q4 2024

Round 3: Feedback on the Plan

- Q2 2025

We will aim to meet with the committee *at least* once for each of these rounds of engagement.

Next Steps




Communications & Engagement

- Finalizing Engagement Plan
- Support development of engagement materials
- Begin engagement round 1

Context Setting

- LTRT reviewing documentation and analyzing provided data



Thank you!
Any
questions?

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

**AAC 1-2024
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Meeting held by electronic participation**

Committee: Councillor Bateman (Committee Chair), M. Abdelmaksoud, L. Hay (Committee Vice-Chair), A. Hernandez, V. Leitch, N. Qureshi, R. Walker, D. Whipple

Absent/Regrets: Bradley (Regional Chair), S. Howe

Staff: T. Dumas, Accessibility Advisor, K. Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, M. Sergi, Commissioner, Growth Strategy & Economic Development, A. Stea, Director, Corporate Strategy & Community Sustainability

Others Present: Councillor Craitor

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Bateman called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Accessible Facilities - Building Portfolio Follow Up

Bradley Ray, Associate Director, Construction, Energy & Facilities Management, provided information in response to questions regarding the presentation on accessible facilities provided at the November 28, 2023, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting. Additional information was provided on door openers on stairwells, customer service, fragrance free cleaning supplies as well as considerations for caregivers.

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no items for consideration.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by N. Qureshi
Seconded by V. Leitch

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

AAC-C 1-2024
Accessibility Compliance Reporting

AAC-C 2-2024
Update on Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – Community Engagement

AAC 4-2023
Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - November 28, 2023

Carried

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Accessibility Planning - Community Engagement

Zoie Browne, Project Manager, and Amitai Zand, Digital Engagement Specialist, LURA Consulting, provided information respecting communication and community engagement planning to solicit feedback related to Niagara Region services to inform the Region's next 5-year Accessibility Plan. Ms. Browne advised that the plan currently includes three in-person and one virtual engagement sessions and an on-line survey. Feedback received will be shared with the Accessibility Advisory Committee at its meeting being held on April 23, 2024.

7.2 Scent-Free Policy

Valerie Leitch, Committee member, enquired whether Niagara Region has a Scent-Free policy. Tammy Dumas, Accessibility Advisor, advised that she would investigate and provide information at the next meeting.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Councillor Bateman
Committee Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Deputy Clerk

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk