

Chair's Report Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

February 3, 2020; 9:30am
Committee Room 1

Chair's Report

- **City of Toronto International Day of Persons with Disabilities Celebration**
 - On December 3, 2019, I brought greetings, on behalf of City Council and TAAC, to the City of Toronto's celebration for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. As the Chair of this Committee, I was asked to read the Mayor's proclamation, declaring the City's participation in this global event to recognize the achievements made by and for people with disabilities. The event took place at Metro Hall.
- **Working Together: One Voice, More Choice**
 - On December 7, 2019, I brought greetings, on behalf of City Council and TAAC, to the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians 4th Annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities event. The day featured a panel which brought together disability organizations, employers and community partners to share best practices, success stories, and celebrate the achievements of persons with disabilities in arts, sports and entertainment.
- **Strategy for reducing poverty in Toronto**
 - At the November 26-27 session, City Council unanimously approved the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy 2019-2022 Term Action Plan. It is the second plan for the 20-year lifecycle of the strategy that began in 2015. The first action plan invested in programs and services supporting low-income Torontonians, establishing a foundation for the new action plan. Over the term of the new action plan, the City will implement various measures to address immediate needs and drive systemic change to benefit people living in poverty in Toronto. Due to systemic barriers and discrimination, people with disabilities are disproportionately represented among the City's low-income population.
- **Action plan to address housing needs**
 - At the December 17-18 session, City Council approved the HousingTO action plan created to address Toronto's housing needs over the next 10 years. The plan will assist almost 350,000 Toronto households, covering the full range of housing, including support for homeless people, social housing, affordable rental housing and long-term care. Implementation of the full 10-year plan, estimated to cost \$23.4 billion, relies on new investments from all three orders of government. The City is committed to

funding \$8.5 billion of that total. This increase stands to benefit people with disabilities who have struggled to find affordable and accessible housing in Toronto.

- **Innovation in long-term care**
 - **At the December 17-18 session, City Council approved a new approach for providing care to residents of City-operated long-term care homes, with the focus on an emotion-centred approach that still maintains clinical excellence. The overall intention is to improve outcomes for the residents and their families. The strategy to implement this new approach includes a 12-month pilot project at Lakeshore Lodge before implementation at all 10 City-run long-term care homes.**
- **Ontario's disability support program**
 - **At the December 17-18 session, City Council supported a member motion to ask the Ontario government to reverse its announced cut to social support funding and to urge the government to maintain the current definition of disability for the Ontario Disability Support Program. Council will also ask the province to continue to increase social assistance rates and engage with people living with disabilities, taking their lived experience into account when designing social assistance programs.**
- **Budgeting for Accessibility**
 - **At the January 17 session, the Budget Committee directed the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer to provide an update on the request by City Council, in Item EX8.22 titled "Proposed Budget Process Changes to Remove Systemic Barriers to Hiring People with Disabilities," to report on the feasibility of exempting all operating and capital costs related to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act compliance and accessibility initiatives from any 2020 proposed efficiency savings. I worked in collaboration with Budget Committee Members, on behalf of TAAC, to ensure that this briefing note direction was brought forward.**
 - **The final vote on the City's 2020 Budget will be held at City Council on February 19.**

Flag Raisings and Proclamations

- **International Day of Persons with Disabilities**
 - **The City of Toronto proclaimed December 3rd as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. With over one billion persons around the world living with a disability, this day aims to promote the global rights and well-**

being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

- o The International Day of Persons with Disabilities promotes awareness and mobilizes support for critical issues related to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The theme for 2019 was “Promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership: taking action on the 2030 Development Agenda.” This theme focuses on the empowerment of persons with disabilities for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development that pledges to “leave no one behind.”**