

Chair's Report

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

November 20, 2020; 9:30am, Committee Room 1

- **Response to COVID-19: Update on Resurgence**

On October 27, 2020, City Council adopted an item called Response to COVID-19: Update on Resurgence. This agenda item directs the General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation to report back to the November 25 and 26, 2020 meeting of City Council on the impacts of, and options for, keeping more public washrooms open and fully accessible including clearing pathways of snow and ice in our parks through the upcoming winter. It also calls on the Government of Ontario to increase the availability and accessibility of pop-up COVID-19 testing in neighbourhoods disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

- **Responding to the Dundas Street Renaming Petition**

On October 27, 2020 City Council adopted an item called Responding to the Dundas Street Renaming Petition. This agenda item directs the City Manager, as part of the public consultation process for Dundas Street, to consider specific outreach to people with disabilities and disability organizations and, as part of the review of the City's overall framework for commemorative policies, to create a selected list of disability accessibility champions, with input from people with disabilities and disability organizations, for consideration when renaming city streets and other public assets.

- **Follow Up: Accessible Housing Network**

On October 29, 2020, the Chair met with the Accessible Housing Network Working Group and Abigail Bond, Executive Director of the Housing Secretariat to discuss the next steps in the work towards making new affordable housing accessible. At their next meeting, they will be presenting on some of their preliminary research and findings.

- **Clearing the Path Towards a Safe and Accessible Winter**

On November 5, 2020, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee adopted an item called Clearing the Path Towards a Safe and Accessible Winter. This agenda item directs the General Manager of Transportation Services to provide an update on the Winter Maintenance Program Review including harmonizing sidewalk clearing standards for neighbourhoods in Midtown, East

York and the downtown core, equipment procurement, and budget impact assessment. This item will be heard at the November 25, 2020 City Council meeting.

- **Access and Waiting Areas at City Hall for People with Disabilities - Update**

On November 2, 2020, the General Government and Licensing Committee adopted an item called Access and Waiting Areas at City Hall for People with Disabilities. This agenda item was a recommendation from our September 24, 2020 meeting to hold public consultations with specific outreach to people with disabilities regarding decisions on any proposed public safety and security measures at City facilities that would impact access and accessibility, including changes to any waiting areas or bus shelters at City Hall or other locations that are used by TTC Wheel-Trans or other customers with disabilities.

Flag Raisings and Proclamations

October 2020 National Disability Employment Awareness Month

- The theme of the 2020 National Disability Employment Awareness Month is: The power of inclusion. This month highlights the need for hiring processes that are inclusive of people with disabilities and their diverse skills and talents. This year workers with disabilities have also been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The closures and changes due to the pandemic, have become another barrier to employment. The City of Toronto recognizes the positive and valuable contributions that those with disabilities make to the workplace.

October 2020 Dwarfism Awareness and Acceptance Month

- Dwarfism Awareness and Acceptance Month raises awareness of dwarfism, a short stature that is caused by genetics or a medical condition. It occurs in approximately every 1 out of 20,000 births. While dwarfism is not considered a disability, the medical complications from dwarfism can be debilitating. Many with it will require surgeries or medical intervention to live healthy lives. The majority do enjoy good health and normal life spans.

October 2020 Dyslexia Awareness Month

- It is estimated that 10 to 15 percent of Canadians live with dyslexia, a neurological condition that affects spelling, reading accuracy and speed as well as comprehension of reading content. Dyslexia affects the way people live their lives. It is a hereditary and lifelong condition, described as an unexpected

difficulty in learning to read. Once the condition has been identified, it can be managed with the proper support.

October 6, 2020 World CP Day

- World CP Day is a day to raise awareness about Cerebral Palsy (CP), celebrate the 17 million people around the world living with CP and to create change. Cerebral palsy is the most common childhood disability. It is a group of disorders that affect movement and muscle tone and is caused by damage that occurs to the brain as it develops, most often before birth. Symptoms include problems with swallowing, delays in speech development or difficulty speaking, learning difficulties, seizures and lack of balance and muscle coordination. This day promotes awareness and showcases the incredible things people with CP can achieve when barriers are removed and supports are in place.

October 24, 2020 World Polio Day

- Polio is a highly infectious disease that affects children under the age of five. It is a virus that invades the nervous system and causes paralysis. Since the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, polio cases have decreased by more than 99 percent. As there is no cure for polio, prevention is very important. The polio vaccine protects children by preparing their bodies to fight the polio virus. Strategies for polio eradication can work when they are fully implemented.

October 29, 2020 Rett Syndrome Awareness Day

- Rett Syndrome is a rare, genetic neurological disorder occurring in every one in 10,000 female births. It is often diagnosed in babies who have missed developmental milestones. Those born with Rett Syndrome will often regress, losing acquired skills such as speech, and gross and fine motor skills. Some will never be able to walk or talk. The City of Toronto supports organizations and individuals committed to raising awareness about diseases, conditions and illnesses that affect all Canadians. Through education, fundraising and support, the health and well-being of our communities are improved.

