

Chair's Report
Submitted by Councillor Wong-Tam to the
Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee
June 2, 2021

- **Limb Loss Awareness Month**

In April, we acknowledged the many Canadians affected by an amputation or who have a limb difference. This loss is not just a physical loss, but one that can sometimes lead to spiritual and financial challenges and social isolation leading to mental health issues.

Those who have experienced a limb loss are encouraged to seek out support and resources that address their specific needs.

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.

- **World Autism Awareness Day**

On April 2, 2021, we acknowledged World Autism Awareness Day raises awareness about people living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the challenges they face every day.

ASD is a developmental disorder that appears in early childhood and it describes a group of conditions that affects communication, social interactions and repetitive behaviours.

World Autism Awareness Day also celebrates the unique talents of those with autism, and the challenges they live with and the importance of understanding these challenges.

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- **Welcome to Our New TAAC Members**

On March 31, 2021, three new members were appointed to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee welcomes Like Anderson, Ashleigh Molloy, and Lana Williams.

Luke Anderson

Luke Anderson, PEng, MSM, is the epitome of a social innovator. As an accomplished speaker and co-founder of the StopGap Foundation, his work helps shift perspectives by delivering key messages that ensure our society's collective understanding about the importance of accessibility and inclusion continues to advance and grow.

Ashleigh Molloy

Dedicated, engaging and passionate educational professional with over 30 years of implementing and delivering professional development strategies to institutions and educators

to meet the objectives of learners. A proven ability to build collaborative partnerships and communicate effectively with various stakeholders. Focused on driving innovation and delivering measurable results towards managing a sustainable, accessible workplace environment transforming businesses and institutions worldwide.

Lana Williams

An international designer that has worked closely and learned from leading accessibility consultants to create large events and spaces with universal design at the forefront of the design principles. Utilizing these skills and knowledge Lana hopes to champion accessibility and work closely with the city and community groups for her home city.

- **Corporate Accessibility Policy**

In 2020, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility conducted an AODA desk audits of selected organizations, including the City of Toronto. In April 2021, the Ministry recommended that the City's Corporate Accessibility Policy be updated to clarify existing requirements related to support persons and individualized workplace emergency response information for employees with a disability. Staff have made these recommended updates, which will go before the General Government and Licensing Committee on May 27, 2021 so that staff can report back to the Ministry by July 2021. The Corporate Accessibility Policy will continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure continued alignment with legislation and Council priorities and proposed revisions will be brought before Council. A full review of the Corporate Accessibility Policy will be conducted by staff as part of the regular policy review process on or before 2022.

- **Response to COVID-19 - May 2021 Update**

On May 10, 2021, the Board of Health received a presentation from the Medical Officer of Health about the City of Toronto's ongoing response to COVID-19 providing an update on the COVID-19 pandemic locally and the status of the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations in Toronto.

- **Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines**

Wendy Porch from the Centre for Independent Living, and Chair of Accessibility Task Force presented to the Board of Health about the ongoing response to COVID-19 including responding to outstanding recommendations from the November 2020 meeting of the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Accessibility Task Force recommendations included the:

- 1) creation of simplified, centralized vaccine booking process that includes disability-related priority groups and navigation supports for disabled people;
- 2) accessibility and accommodations training for staff at vaccine clinics to appropriately provide accommodations and care from a human rights perspective;
- 3) accessible clinic locations that include private, quiet spaces available for those who require this as an accommodation and other accommodations, as requested;

- 4) disability-specific clinics, such as mobile, drive through, and pop-up community clinics, that are appropriately resourced to ensure that these options are offered in a timely fashion;
- 5) prioritized access to in-home vaccination through existing mobile vaccination outreach methods, including Emergency Medical Services and Ontario Health Teams-mediated mobile vaccination efforts;
- 6) and clear communication and navigation resources, in accessible formats such as Braille, plain language, and American Sign Language, that are specific to people with disabilities and include information about their eligibility and how to access vaccines.

Wendy Porch has been invited to present an update and ongoing work of the Accessibility Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccines at the June 2, 2021 TAAC meeting for information

- **E-scooters - Accessibility and Insurance Issues**

On May 5, 2021, City Council adopted staff recommendations to not participate in a pilot program to permit the use of e-scooters in Toronto due to concerns around accessibility and insurance issues. They additionally requested Transport Canada to regulate harmonized micro mobility vehicle safety, standards, testing and labelling, and conduct robust consultation with key stakeholders on universal accessibility, active transportation and road safety, given the importance of consumer safety and protection, as well as clarity for businesses that manufacture, import, distribute, retail and provide insurance products for micro mobility. City Council received a letter from the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee from their meeting on February 25, 2021.

- **Supporting Disabled Drivers Who Need Help at Gas Pumps**

On May 5, 2021, City Council requested the Province of Ontario to support a cost-effective, application-based, station locate system to further assist mobility-challenged drivers to full service gas retail stations, and that this measure be included as part of the 'Customer Service' section of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Additionally, it was requested that the Province of Ontario adopt guidelines which identify a geographic radius for which full-service at gas stations would be available and work with gas companies and franchise owner-operators to support an application-based, cost-effective, station locate system for full-service availability across the City of Toronto.

- **Request to have Parks Washroom Facilities Open Sooner**

On April 7, 2021, City Council adopted that Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee with a plan to open all public park washrooms before the Victoria Day long weekend. On April 28, 2021, City staff reported that all public park washrooms were expected to be open by May 7, 2021.