



## **Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

### **1. MANDATE:**

As established by Section.9 of the British Columbia Accessibility Act (BCAA), the mandate of the Smithers Accessibility Committee is to work collaboratively with the Town of Smithers Council and staff and the public to assess and improve community accessibility and inclusion with focus on the experiences of people with disabilities.

The Committee will provide advice on:

- a. Preparing an organizational Accessibility Plan for the Town; this will involve identifying and providing recommendations to prevent / remove barriers that limit the full participation of individuals with disabilities while interacting with the Town in various ways, including but not limited to, service delivery, built environment, information and communication, transportation, and employment;
- b. Establishing a mechanism to receive, review, and respond to public feedback on accessibility-related issues;
- c. Policies and programs to ensure that the needs of current and future residents with disabilities are considered and to educate and inform public on matters affecting residents with disabilities;
- d. Drafting and implementing the periodic reviews and updates of the Town's Accessibility Plan;
- e. referrals from the Town Council, Library Board, and Committees of Council;
- f. initiatives that will improve accessibility and inclusion in Smithers; and
- g. accessibility and inclusivity within Town departments, municipal events, and Town operations.

### **2. MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1 The Committee will be comprised of at least seven (7), and up to twelve (12) voting members, representing the public, business, and community interests. The Town will strive to maintain the following membership criteria:
  - a. Fifty percent (50%) of members are persons with a disability, or are individuals who support persons with disabilities either at a personal or organizational level;
  - b. At least one (1) Indigenous member; and
  - c. Reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in BC.
- 2.2 The Committee will include the following five (5) non-voting members:
  - a. One (1) Council member;

- b. Director of Smithers Public Library or a delegate;
- c. Director of Development Services or a delegate;
- d. Director of Operations or a delegate; and
- e. Recording Secretary, Development Services Department.

### **3. APPOINTMENTS**

- 3.1 Vacancies for voting members of the Committee will be advertised by the Town; interested individuals shall submit applications to the Town.
- 3.2 The Mayor and Council shall approve the appointment of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations for membership will be provided to Council by staff.
- 3.3 The Committee member and the alternate representing Council shall be appointed by the Mayor and will serve a four-year term running concurrently with their election to Council, or until determined otherwise by the Mayor.
- 3.4 The appointment of the non-voting Town / Library staff member(s) on the Committee will be exempt from regulations, which apply to the appointment of voting members.
- 3.5 The Director of Development Services shall be the staff Liaison on the Committee.

### **4. TERM**

- 4.1 Fifty percent (50%) of the first Accessibility Committee established in 2023 shall be appointed for a two-year term while the rest of the members shall be appointed for a three-year term. The term for a member appointed either in or after 2024 shall be three (3) years.
- 4.2 Members shall reapply to Council at the end of their term if they wish to remain on the Committee. There is no maximum time limit for a member to serve on the Committee, subject to reappointment by Council.

### **5. MEETING PROCEDURES**

#### **5.1 Quorum**

- 5.1.1 A quorum shall consist of fifty percent (50%) or more of the voting members and will be required for decision-making.
- 5.1.2 If a quorum is not present within ten (10) minutes following the time at which the meeting was to commence, the Recording Secretary shall record the names of the members present at the meeting, and the Chair /Vice Chair / Temporary Chair shall adjourn the meeting.
- 5.1.3 Recommendations of the Committee shall be supported by a simple majority vote, provided quorum is met at that meeting; a tie vote shall defeat the recommendation.

## **5.2 Meeting Frequency:**

- 5.2.1 In the first year, the Committee shall meet as necessary to complete the Town's organizational Accessibility Plan, and thereafter shall meet on a quarterly basis.
- 5.2.2 Additional meetings may be scheduled, if necessary. Dates, times, and places of the quarterly meetings will be established at the first committee meeting every year.
- 5.2.3 Meeting times and locations of the regular, quarterly meetings will be posted seventy-four (74) hours in advance on the Town's Official website, Facebook Page, and public notice boards. This period may be reduced to a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours for other Committee meetings.
- 5.2.4 All meetings will be open to the public to attend.

## **5.3 Conduct**

- 5.3.1 All committee meetings will be conducted in an orderly and business-like manner and will be open to the public.
- 5.3.2 The order of business will be indicated on the agenda which will be prepared by the Chair and the staff liaison. Late items may be requested by a committee member and must be approved by majority vote of the committee members at the meeting.
- 5.3.3 All committee meetings shall commence at the stated time. The conduct of meetings shall enable members of the committee to consider information presented, weigh evidence related thereto, and make informed decisions.
- 5.3.4 Committee members shall:
  - a. Be familiar with the Committee's roles and responsibilities;
  - b. Raise any accessibility and inclusion-related concerns, which they have observed or have been brought to their attention by community members;
  - c. Attend at least half of the Committee's meetings every year;
  - d. Prior to every meeting familiarize themselves with the agenda and obtain any additional information that may be necessary to actively participate in the discussions and make well-informed decisions;
  - e. Declare a conflict of interest when appropriate and they are involved in a topic under the Committee's review and shall leave the meeting for the period of discussion/voting on the topic under consideration.
  - f. Agree to disagree; consensus may not always be achieved;
  - g. Be respectful in fulfilling their responsibilities; and
  - h. RSVP to the Recording Secretary whether they will attend a meeting.

#### **5.4 Role of the Chair**

- 5.4.1 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be selected by voting members of the Committee for a term of two (2) years at the first meeting.
- 5.4.2 The Chair shall be responsible for calling meetings, setting agendas, conducting meetings; providing leadership; and ensuring that meetings are accurately documented.
- 5.4.3 A Chair shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- 5.4.4 In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will preside over the meeting. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, a Temporary Chair will be selected by the remaining voting members of the Committee and shall preside over the meeting.

#### **5.5 Delivery of Agenda**

A copy of the agenda will be delivered by email or available for pick up from the Municipal Office, at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the scheduled meeting time. Copies of communications and other documents and exhibits, which are available and pertinent to the meeting, will also be shared.

#### **5.5 Attendance at Meetings**

Attendance at meetings will be encouraged for all committee members. The Committee, by resolution, may recommend the Town Council to remove a Committee member who was absent for three consecutive Committee meetings without leave of absence from the Committee or a reason satisfactory to the Committee.

#### **5.6 Minutes**

The Town of Smithers staff will prepare the minutes of all Committee meetings. The minutes shall be made available as per the Town of Smithers Council Procedures Bylaw.