



# **Thames Centre Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee**

## **Terms of Reference**

Established: March 8, 2021  
Terms of Reference Approved: May 2021

**DRAFT – AUGUST 2024**

## **Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee**

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**Role:**

The Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee for the Municipality of Thames Centre was established to advise Council on promoting awareness and ensuring the barriers to accessibility and inclusivity are identified and improved upon.

The Committee is tasked with promotion of accessibility, acceptance, and inclusion of all those who live, work and visit the community, so they are empowered to achieve their full potential in our community.

The Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee shall operate by majority votes and does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities of Staff or Council.

**Mission:**

The mission for this Committee includes:

- Provide advice to Council on matters related to accessibility and inclusion within Thames Centre
- Advocate for policies, programs and events that foster an atmosphere that is conducive to a harmonious community.
- To work with staff and Council towards membership with the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities through the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and then work towards ongoing implementation of improvements and actions recommended within this framework.
- Formulate recommendations to Council for a potential action plan to celebrate diversity, accessibility and inclusion.
- To solicit community input on all matters related to accessibility and inclusivity within Thames Centre, including but not limited to: ensuring effective municipal communications, transportation standards (transit, roads, sidewalks, transitions, etc), and the design of public spaces (parks, playgrounds, facilities, trails, etc).
- Advise Council, staff and community members regarding available resources and programs relating to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Promote awareness of accessibility and inclusion.

**Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of all appointed members to comply with the:

- *Municipal Act*
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
- Municipality of Thames Centre Code of Conduct;

- Municipal Procedural By-law
- Other applicable Municipal by-laws and policies

The Committee as a whole, nor any individual member, has the authority to make direct representations of the Municipality of Thames Centre to Federal or Provincial Governments. Members shall abide by the rules outlined within the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and shall disclose the pecuniary interest to the Committee Secretary and remove themselves from meetings for the duration of the discussion and voting (if any) with respect to that matter.

The Committee will abide by any terms and conditions which may be set out by Thames Centre Municipal Council, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Clerk, Solicitor, Auditor and/or Insurer for any activities relating to Committee business.

**Activities:**

The following are the activities and responsibilities of the Committee:

- (a) To advise and make recommendations to Council on various issues related to the Committee's mission;
- (b) To advise and make recommendations to Council on strategy, policies and procedures to achieve Council's goals relating to the Committee's mandate;
- (c) To develop and recommend to Council the promotion of public education programs on local related issues and related to the Committee's mandate;
- (d) To review other governmental reports/programs/funding and advise and make recommendations to Council of any impacts of those reports for the Municipality and any action that should be considered by Council;
- (e) Other initiatives as recommended and approved by Council.

**Composition:**

- The Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee will be composed of a minimum of five (5) members, consisting of a minimum of three (3) community representatives, and a maximum of two (2) Council representatives who will be voting members. Committee members will be appointed by Council in accordance with established policy.
- The Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee endeavors to ensure full participatory representation of the Thames Centre community and therefore will endeavor to generally represent the diversity of the Municipality.

- The Committee shall at its first meeting in each term, elect from its membership a Chair and Vice-Chair. A Council representative will be appointed as Chair for the meetings of the Committee.
- It is acknowledged that there are no per diems for any Committee positions, and it is acknowledged that none of the above positions shall be paid for their services. All committee members are considered volunteer positions. Mileage costs and other minor expenses related to committee activities may be eligible for reimbursement subject to budget approvals by Council. No attendance at conferences or workshops shall be allowed by a volunteer member, unless clearly identified in the work plan/budget and approved by Council in advance.

**Term of Appointment:**

Unless exempted by legislation, Committee members shall be appointed for the term of Council and shall continue to serve beyond the termination of their appointments until the appointments of their successors have been confirmed by Council.

**Resources:**

The Municipality of Thames Centre affects and is affected by many different departments. Assistance will be provided on an as required basis from various departments. Municipal Staff will be responsible for carrying out the following functions with respect to the Committee:

- Act as an information resource;
- Provide orientation to the Committee members;
- Assist the Committee in reporting to Council;
- Provide correspondence to the Committee;
- Responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date committee records and providing minutes to Council;

Staff will endeavor to use outside resources on an as needed basis.

**Timing of Meetings:**

Meetings shall be held on weekdays with the start time determined by the Committee or at the call of the Chair.

**Meetings:**

- The Accessibility and Inclusivity Advisory Committee will meet on a quarterly basis with a minimum of two (2) meetings per year and other meetings as required. The meeting schedule will be established on an annual basis and at the last meeting of each calendar year. Meeting are subject to change by resolution of the Committee.
- The Chair shall cause notice of special meetings, including agenda items for all meetings.

- Agendas are to be provided to members of the Committee a minimum of 48 hours prior to the date of each meeting. The Quorum for meetings shall consist of a majority of the members of the Committee. No meeting shall proceed without a quorum.
- Any member of the Committee who misses three consecutive formal business meetings, without being excused by the Committee, may be removed from the Committee in accordance with the adopted policy.

**Procedures:**

Procedures for the meetings of the Committee shall be governed by the Municipality of Thames Centre Procedural By-law and Legislation.

**Agendas and Minutes:**

The Committee Secretary will distribute the agenda to members of the Committee as per established policy and have it posted on the website.

Minutes of all meetings of the Committee shall be brought to Council and received as information. Any action items requested of staff by the committee will be at the consideration of the CAO and/or requiring Council approval depending on the nature of resources requested by the committee.

**Location of Meetings:**

The location of the meetings will be held virtually.

**Council Role**

Council may, at its discretion, review the composition of the Committee to ensure that it is representative of their mandate and is working effectively. Council can, with or without the advice of the Committee, make changes to membership composition to ensure Committee effectiveness.

**Purchasing Policy:**

This Committee has no purchasing or procurement responsibilities.

**Expulsion of Member:**

The Committee may recommend to Council the expulsion of a member or Council may remove a member for reasons as listed, but not limited to, the member being in contravention of the *Municipal Act*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the *Provincial Offences Act*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*; contravention of municipal policies, disrupting the work of the Committee or other legal

issues.

**Terms of Reference:**

Any responsibilities not clearly identified within these Terms of Reference shall be the responsibility of the Municipality of Thames Centre. Council may, at its discretion, change the Terms of Reference for this Committee at any time. Any changes proposed to these Terms of Reference by the Committee shall be recommended to Council.

At the discretion or upon the mandate of the Committee being fulfilled, the Committee may be dissolved by resolution of Council.

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