

Access the County Task Team

Terms of Reference

Mandate

The Access the County Task Team will support the municipality in implementing the grant-funded Access the County program. The program is designed to increase awareness and understanding among small businesses about their obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, and to promote accessibility in general among small businesses in The County.

Definitions

"Access the County" is a new municipal program funded by a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility. The goals of the program are to:

- increase awareness and understanding among small businesses about their obligations under *AODA*; and
- to promote accessibility in general among small businesses in The County.

The program includes a number of activities including needs assessment, development of training materials/product, recruitment of business participants, training delivery and program evaluation.

"Business Champions" are volunteers from the small business sector with experience, expertise and enthusiasm for improving accessibility in Prince Edward County businesses. Their role is to promote participation among businesses and provide peer-to-peer support and encouragement to their colleagues in the business community. Business Champions will be offered an honorarium, funded through the grant program.

"Small business" means a business with fewer than 20 employees. This includes approximately 1000 businesses in Prince Edward County. Small businesses have different compliance standards under *AODA* than businesses with 20+ employees.

Goals/Purpose

The goals and purpose of the Access the County Task Team are to:

1. Review the proposed Access the County program as described in the grant application and develop an implementation plan that will achieve the grant deliverables within the prescribed budget and timeline.

2. Ensure collaboration between municipal staff, Accessibility Advisory Committee members and community volunteers to achieve the deliverables of the program.
3. Assess existing research and training resources that can be used in support of the Access the County program. Recommend and/or conduct additional research or resource development as required.
4. Assist staff in developing the scope of work/role description and recruiting/selecting any hired consultants and/or "Business Champions" who will be engaged for this project.
5. Monitor the program's implementation and provide guidance and support to staff, consultants and Business Champions as required.
6. Support staff in program evaluation, reporting to the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility, and recommending next steps to support small business compliance with AODA in Prince Edward County.

Membership

The Access the County Task Team will be a group of:

- Two (2) members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Task Team may invite participation from non-voting technical experts as needed, such as representatives from business organizations (chambers, BIAs, DMOs etc) and organizations whose clients are people with disabilities.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee may terminate the appointment of any member without notice.

Roles

The roles of the members are to:

- a. actively participate, and provide support and expertise;
- b. adopt a participatory, inclusive, collaborative and respectful approach;
- c. undertake tasks to support the implementation of program such as research, drafting documents or contacting potential participants as required;
- d. serve as voting members, unless otherwise specified, and count towards meeting quorum for Task Team meetings.

Responsibilities of the Task Team

The Task Team is encouraged to work with County procedures, by-laws and Provincial legislation, with guidance from staff:

- Council's Code of Conduct
- County Accountability and Transparency Policy
- County Procedural By-law
- Other applicable County by-laws and policies
- Municipal Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Task team will make recommendations to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and ultimately Council. The Task Team will engage with the public/community, as applicable.

Term

The term of the Task Team will be until the completion of the Access the County program, which includes final reporting to the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility on the program outcomes.

Staff Support

Upon request from the Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, staff supports and resources may be provided to the Task Team with the approval of CAO. Staff support will come from the Community Programs, Services and Initiatives department with additional support from the Clerk's office.

Reporting Relationship to Council

The Access the County Task Team will act as a resource to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and does and does not have any delegated authority.

The Task Team is intended to support and will report to the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Finances

No member shall receive remuneration for participating in the Task Team.

Members of the Task Team may also participate as "Business Champions" with specific roles, responsibilities and deliverables as described in the Business Champions role description. Members of the Task Team who wish to serve as Business Champions will recuse themselves from the process of selecting Business Champions.

Adopted by Council on April 9, 2024
Approved by Motion 2024-180
Amended by Accessibility Advisory Committee on July 18, 2024

A member is entitled to reimbursement for any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses that have been pre-approved by the CAO or Council.

Meetings

The Access the County Task Team will meet an average of once per month with more frequent meetings if required in the first phases of work.

Should a public meeting be required, staff will provide support, on direction from the CAO.