

# Memorandum to Council

Community Services Department

Recreation Services Division



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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**CC:** Sharon Meredith, Director, Recreation  
Kim Evans, Manager, 55+ Recreation,  
Accessibility & Diversity

**From:** John Romano, Commissioner, Community  
Services

**Date:** May 31, 2024

**File #:** N/A

**Subject:** Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting -  
May 7, 2024 Recommendation

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**Acknowledged by M. Gaskell,  
Chief Administrative Officer**

At their meeting on May 7, the Accessibility Advisory Committee passed the following recommendation: “That the Accessibility Advisory Committee requests that Council direct Staff to include questions about accessibility and inclusion on all public facing consultation and surveys.”

This recommendation came about after review of recent community consultation on projects through Connect Whitby that ask for general feedback about facilities, projects, and services. For future projects, the Committee would like to request a question or questions that ask about accessibility and inclusion directly. This can help residents feel they have an opportunity to identify any barriers that prohibit them from participating in Town facilities, programs and services and offer solutions to improve their experience. Any feedback received related to accessibility and inclusion would be considered along with other more general feedback and would be factored into the decision-making process along with other project priorities.

The following are a few examples of questions that could be used for surveys and other feedback methods:

- **If asking about a new park being built** - What accessible/inclusive features would you like to see included at the park? What barriers would prohibit you from participating at the park?
- **If asking about a new event** - What accessible/inclusive features would you like to see included at the event? What barriers would prohibit you from attending Town events?

- **If asking about the budget** - Are there any projects you would like to see prioritized that improve accessibility and inclusion within the Town?
- **If asking about communications** - How can the Town provide information to you in the most inclusive manner? Where are you getting your information about Town projects?
- **If asking about a Community Strategic Plan** - What barriers are you facing to participating in Town programs, services or facilities? As a person with a disability do you feel included and heard in the Town of Whitby?
- **If asking about active transportation** - Are there barriers you face using Town multiuse paths or sidewalks? Do micro-mobility sport devices (e-scooters, e-bikes, e-skateboards, etc.) impact your ability to safely move through the community?
- **A general question** - What barriers do you face when accessing Town services and facilities? In what ways can these barriers be removed?

Staff are in support of looking at ways we can improve accessibility and inclusion in the facilities and services that we provide and want to better understand barriers residents face and how we can help overcome them.

This supports the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(Ontario Regulation 191/11\)](#) that public sector organizations must comply with: to identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities through customer service, information and communication and design of public spaces.

This request also aligns with the Town's [statement of commitment](#) that Council adopted in 2021.

Moving forward, when undertaking community consultation for future projects staff will review the appropriate questions to ask about accessibility and potential barriers that individuals may experience that can be included.