



AGENDA ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 16 at 6:00 p.m.
River Plate Room, Town Hall
Meeting No. 4

Online Agenda: Anything in **blue** denotes an attachment/link. By clicking the links on the agenda page, you can jump directly to that section of the agenda. To maneuver back to the agenda page use the **Ctrl + Home** keys simultaneously **OR** use the “Bookmark” icon on the navigation panel to the left of your screen.



Alternative formats available upon request by contacting:
sarah.moore@ajax.ca or 905-619-2529 ext. 3347

1. Call to Order

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1 March 20, 2014 Page 3

4. Presentation/Discussion Items

4.1 Town Facility Renovations & Retrofits (6:00 – 6:30 p.m.)
Ray Ford, Building Maintenance Manager

4.2 Parks & Playgrounds Construction Update (6:30 – 7:00 p.m.)
Andrew Jackson, Landscape Architect

4.3 DRAFT 2014 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan (7:00 – 7:10 p.m.) Page 7
Sarah Moore, Committee Coordinator

4.4 “Accessibility Opens Doors” Information Piece Check-in (7:10 – 7:15 p.m.)

4.5 Accessibility Training Opportunity – Recreation & Culture Update (7:15 – 7:20 p.m.)

4.6 End of Term Report to Council – June 8, 2014? (7:20 – 7:25 p.m.)

4.7 Regional AAC Newsletter (7:25 – 7:30 p.m.) Page 20

4.8 National Access Awareness Week Recognition (7:30 – 7:45 p.m.) Page 23

5. Standing Items

5.1 2014 Work Plan Page 25

5.2 Regional AAC Chairs Group Update

5.3 Pan Am 2015 Local Host Committee Update

6. Correspondence

7. Update from Council

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Monday April 28, 6 – 7:30 p.m., River Plate Room, Town Hall – NAAW Sub-committee
Wednesday May 21, 2014 at 6:00 – 6:45 p.m., River Plate Room, Town Hall
7:00 – 9:00 p.m., *“Inside Internet Voting”*, Council Chambers



DRAFT MINUTES
Accessibility Advisory Committee

March 20, 2014
River Plate Room, Town Hall
Meeting No. 3

Alternative formats available upon request by contacting:
sarah.moore@ajax.ca or 905-619-2529 ext. 3347

Committee Members: Marcia Bowen
Shandell Conboy
Sepelene Deonarine,
Carion Fenn
Camille Gooden
Donna Mullings, Vice-Chair
Kathreen Smith, Chair
Ray Smith
Michel St-Arneault

Staff: Sarah Moore, Committee Coordinator

Guests: Kate Bird, Chief Executive Officer Wind Reach Farms

Regrets: Councillor Pat Brown, Barb Dowds, Camille Gooden, Julia Stevenson

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Mullings called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roundtable introductions were made and new Members were welcomed.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: M. St-Arneault
Seconded by: M. Bowen

That the Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting held on February 19, 2014, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Presentation/Discussion Items

4.1 Wind Reach Farms

Ms. Kate Bird, Chief Executive Officer of Wind Reach Farms, delivered an informative presentation on the not-for-profit organization for people of all abilities to enjoy farming and recreation, located in Ashburn, ON. Ms. Bird provided details of Wind Reach's core services including day visit, therapeutic riding program, accessible accommodations, work experience program and volunteer program opportunities with Wind Reach Farms. In 2014, the farm will be celebrating its 25th anniversary. The farm receives over 20,000 visits each year.

Ms. Bird distributed materials relative to upcoming events at the Farm, as well as orientation sessions for potential volunteers. She noted the availability of volunteer opportunities for tour leaders, animal care, stables assistance, gardening, special events, as well as administration and the general store. She encouraged Members to share communications about Wind Reach

An informational video was shown and Members posed questions relative to fundraising and donations, group bookings, and volunteer eligibility.

4.2 Advisory Committee Review

Ms. Moore solicited comments and feedback from the Committee relative to several new and revised advisory committee-related documents. Specific focus was paid to the Advisory Committee Policy & Procedure document and the Accessibility Advisory Committee Profile.

Members requested additional time to review and provide comments. The potential of including a requirement for criminal reference checks was discussed in detail. Members identified several accessibility concerns regarding financial barriers for applicants to be required to cover the cost of the check, as well as existing discrimination of persons with mental health disabilities in relation to policing and corrections. Due to the nature of the advisory committee's role, Members did not consider it relevant to request a criminal reference check, as the Committee does not handle money and is always interacting with the public at Community events under the supervision of Town staff. Should the Town pursue the requirement for Advisory Committee Members, it was suggested that the cost be covered by the Town.

Additional comments and feedback on the policy and procedure documents were requested by Ms. Moore for April 4, 2014

4.3 National Access Awareness Week

Ms. Moore shared the origin of National Access Awareness Week for the benefit of new Members and provided a summary of the Town's recent participation initiatives. She opened the floor to suggestions for 2014 activities. Members expressed interest in a variety of community engagement opportunities, including a proclamation request to Council on May 12, 2014, and interaction with local schools and businesses as well as partnership with the Ajax Public Library.

Suggestions to host a panel discussion with entertainment and a guest speaker or “Dining in the Dark” event at the St. Francis Centre were shared. Being larger initiatives requiring more planning time and budget allocation, they were considered initiatives better aligned for a later date or event for 2015.

The focus for 2014 was identified to include invitations to local elementary schools to visit Town Hall and participate in an accessibility workshop/presentation as well as preparation and distribution of accessibility tool-kits for local businesses.

Further discussion will be facilitated via email and at the April 16, 2014 Meeting.

4.4 “Accessibility Opens Doors” Information Piece

Ms. Moore provided a brief overview of the Committee’s intent to create a communications piece relevant to the importance of installation of automatic door operators for local businesses. Vice-Chair Mullings thanked those Members who conducted research for content. The next steps identified were to consolidate the information and prepare a draft layout. Ms. Conboy, Ms. Bowen and Ms. Deonarine expressed interest in revising the content for a draft. Vice-Chair Mullings requested edits and revisions to be forwarded by April 7, 2014.

4.5 Accessibility Training Opportunity – Recreation & Culture

Ms. Moore informed the Committee that while she is unable to personally deliver accessibility and human rights training to the part-time summer staff, she and the Recreation Coordinator organizing the training thought it may be an opportunity of interest to the Committee to deliver a brief 20-30 minute presentation on accessibility. The training is scheduled for Monday June 23, 2014 in the afternoon at the Ajax Community Centre. Several Members expressed interest in participating. Ms. Moore agreed to coordinate with the working group via email in between Meetings.

4.6 Facility Retrofit Wish List

Ms. Moore noted that the Staff Diversity & Community Engagement Committee was interested in the Committee’s suggestions for future capital project accessibility retrofits to Town Facilities. Members were encouraged to provide feedback for discussion with the Town’s Building and Maintenance Manager at a forthcoming meeting.

5. Standing Items

5.1 2013 Work Plan

No substantive changes were noted.

5.2 Regional AAC Chairs Group Update

None.

5.3 Pan Am Local Host Committee Update

None.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Update from Council

Ms. Moore noted that Councillor Brown had sent her regrets.

8. New Business

None

9. Adjournment

Moved by: M. St-Arneault
Seconded by: S. Deonarine

That the March 20, 2014 meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be adjourned (8:10 p.m.).

CARRIED

DRAFT

2014 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

**BRING ON
THE VOTE**
Ajax Municipal Election



65 Harwood Avenue South
Ajax, ON L1S 2H9
905-683-4550
TextNET: 1-866-460-4489
Fax: 905-683-1061
Email: elections@ajax.ca
www.ajax.ca

*Alternative formats of this
document are available
upon request.*

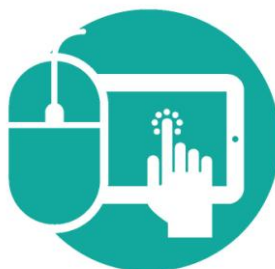


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1. INTRODUCTION

This plan will address the specific requirements pertaining to accessibility in relation to the 2014 Municipal Election in the Town of Ajax.

On December 17, 2009, Bill 212 was enacted to amend various provisions within the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (MEA). These amendments came into force and effect on January 1, 2010. In relation to accessibility issues the following provisions are mandated for the 2014 Municipal Election:

- Regard to the needs of electors, candidates and election officials with disabilities
- Ensuring that voting places are accessible to persons with disabilities
- Submission of a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of election barriers that affect persons with disabilities

The Town of Ajax has made great efforts in promoting a barrier free community. . This commitment is echoed through the Town's multi-year accessibility plan and implementation of *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) accessibility standards to improve the provision of customer service, information & communications, employment, transportation and the built environment for people with disabilities. In efforts to ensure that the 2014 Municipal Election is consistent with the core principles of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, this planning document was developed in advance of the election in order to identify measures to be taken and reported to Council following the election.

2. OBJECTIVES

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town will be implementing, to ensure equal opportunity for all electors and candidates. These objectives include:

- That all polling locations are accessible
- That persons with disabilities are able to independently and cast their vote and verify their selection
- That persons with disabilities have full and equal access to all information on where and when to vote and on eligible candidates
- That persons with disabilities can fully participate in the Municipal Election as an elector, candidate, or election official.
- That electors with disabilities are aware of the accessibility measures available via channels such as the newspaper, media launches, the Town's website and social media.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

This Plan is a "living" document throughout the Election Year, which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities of improvement arise.

In order to develop the plan below, several steps were taken in order to ensure that the statutory requirements were met and a feasible implementation plan was in place. During the development of the 2014 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps shall be implemented:

2014 Town of Ajax Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

- Review and analysis of documents, policies and other supporting materials from AMCTO, neighboring municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and other various stakeholder groups
- Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities are able to vote in a positive environment, and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that in every way possible a voter's needs are to be accommodated whenever possible.
- Consultation and meetings with the 2014 Election Team and Accessibility Advisory Committee to substantiate that the Plan meets the needs of persons with disabilities
- Presentation of a draft plan and a demonstration of accessible voting equipment to the Town of Ajax Accessibility Advisory Committee (April 16, 2014)
- Presentation of a draft plan to the General Government Committee (May 8, 2014 - approved by Council May 12, 2014)

4. VOTING LOCATION

A comprehensive accessibility audit of each physical polling location will be conducted. Section 12.0 of this plan will include site audit summary information sheets relative to each polling location selected for use. The following considerations are taken into account when determining which locations will be used:

4.1 Accessible Route

Proximity of the voting location to accessible public transit routes shall be considered in the selection of voting locations. The name and/or address of the voting location shall be clearly visible. An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the polling location and into the voting area within the location. The voting area shall be identified with clear and understandable signage.

Seating areas shall be provided throughout the voting location for individuals needing a rest.

4.2 Entrance and Egress

The route to the entrance of the voting location shall be unobstructed and accessible. The route shall be wide enough to allow for an individual using a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device, or service animal to travel safely. Doors into the voting location and voting area shall be accessible and easy to open or shall remain propped open for the duration of the polling locations hours. Routine checks of entrance and egress routes will be made throughout the voting day.

4.3 Parking

Accessible parking shall be available at all voting locations. The designated parking space(s) shall be clearly marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility and will be on firm and level ground, close to the entrance of the voting location. By-law staff will monitor and enforce parking at voting locations throughout the day.

5. VOTING METHODS

The 2014 Town of Ajax Municipal Election will be working with Intelivote Systems Inc. to provide eVoting services to eligible voters/ This includes the convenience and independence of voting from anywhere via telephone, internet or in-person at a Polling Station during the October 20 – 27, 2014 Voting Period.

Everyday tools like computers, telephones and other aids can present accessible opportunities for persons with disabilities to accomplish more, while being consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity.

The Intelivote Voting System provides voters with the capability to vote from the comfort of their own home. Voting from home facilitates the voting process for persons with disabilities who may have mobility restrictions and/or have a difficult time with transportation.

Allowing persons with disabilities to vote from any location and from a selection of methods, there is an increase in the capability for the voter to vote without any assistance. This provides persons with disabilities the same independence and privacy in participating in the election as other voters. If persons with disabilities do require assistance in the voting process, trained Election Officials will be present at in-person Polling Locations open throughout the voting period.

5.1 Telephone Voting

Eligible voters may vote using a touch-tone telephone, their PIN and qualifying information, to access the telephone number provided in their Voter Instruction Letter. Communications barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. Barriers may be identified as low volume, use of language that is not clear or plain, and confusing or unorganized menu options.

The Intelivote telephone voting application provides the following:

- Service on all types of touch tone phones and wireless devices
- Clear, plain language, with English and French options
- Menu options that are easy to follow, advising when to select options and provision of confirmation of your selections
- Standard volume is used to allow for adjustment dependent of the telephone or device being utilized

Voters may also use the TTY (Teletypewriter) service to access eVoting services. TTY users should have full confidence when using the TTY service integrated with the Intelivote Systems voting application by phone. TTY operators received training and are required by law to maintain confidentiality of the information disclosed. No record-keeping of conversations is stored.

5.2 Internet Voting

Eligible voters may vote online, using a smart phone, tablet device or computer and any accompanying assistive devices or software, along with their PIN and qualifying information, to access the internet address provided in their Voter Instruction Letter.

The Intelivote System has been created to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), so that persons with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the online voting system. It is compliant with the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium website principles, which include organization, functionality and readability of information provided, as well as alternative ways of representing information, such as with audio.

5.3 In-person Voting at Polling Stations

For those individuals without means to access voting via telephone or internet, several advance voting Polling Stations and Election Day Polling Stations will be open to provide in-person internet voting opportunities via a laptop or touch screen monitor.

Access to the Polling Station interior and voting area shall be level and slip-resistant. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area shall be well lit and seating shall be available. Entrance corridors shall be clear of obstructions and tripping hazards and will allow sufficient space for use of a wheelchair or scooter.

A sample Polling Location sample floor plan is attached as **Appendix A**.

An accessible voting area will be available at each polling location. These areas shall be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively. A large print Notice of Ballot shall be displayed in close proximity to the voting booth.

Voters may attend any Polling Station location throughout the voting period, regardless of their residence within Ajax.

The Town will be operating the following advance voting place locations during the Advance Voting Period:

October 20, 21, and 22 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Council Chambers (65 Harwood Avenue South)

October 22 - 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Ajax Community Centre HMS Room (75 Centennial Drive)

October 23 - 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
McLean Community Centre Banquet Hall (95 Magill Drive)

October 25 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
McLean Community Centre Banquet Hall (95 Magill Drive)

October 26 - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Ajax Community Centre HMS Room (75 Centennial Drive)

The following polling locations will be open on Election Day, Monday October 27, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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North Ajax – Wards 1 & 2

- **Kinsmen Heritage Centre** (120 Roberson Drive)
- **Lincoln Alexander Public School** (95 Church Street North)
- **McLean Community Centre** (95 Magill Drive)
- **Audley Recreation Centre** (1955 Audley Road North)
- **J. Clarke Richardson** (1355 Harwood Avenue North)

South Ajax – Wards 3 & 4

- **St. Francis Centre** (78 Church Street South)
- **Ajax Community Centre** (75 Centennial Road)
- **Lakeside Public School** (4 Parkes Drive)
- **Ajax Public Library - Main Branch** (55 Harwood Avenue South)
- **Carruthers Marsh Pavilion** (55 Ashbury Drive)

A map of Election Day Polling Locations is attached as **Appendix B**.

5.4 Special Voting Provisions

Election staff shall visit sites including long-term care facilities and retirement homes, to set-up on-site voting kiosks, or bedside voting opportunities for residents.

6. VOTING ASSISTANCE

6.1 Support Person/Friend of the Voter

Pursuant to Section 4.3 of the Town of Ajax Accessible Customer Service Policy people with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a support person at any voting location. A designated support person and/or 'Friend of the Voter' will be administered an oath of secrecy/confidentiality by an Election Official prior to providing any such assistance.

6.2 Service Animals

Pursuant to Section 4.2 of the Town of Ajax Accessible Customer Service Policy individuals requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all voting locations.

6.3 Election Officials

At in-person Polling Locations, upon request, Election Officials are available to assist any voter who requires assistance casting their online ballot. All individuals working in the capacity of an Election Official are formally appointed as such and administered an oath of secrecy prior to voting day.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

The 2014 Municipal Election Accessibility Plan will be made available at Town Hall and by way of the Town's web site www.ajax.ca and 2014 Election web site www.ajaxvotes2014.ca. Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

Information regarding the accessibility measures provided for the 2014 Municipal Election shall be included in general election advertising as well as in the 2014 Municipal Election Nomination Package.

7.1 Election Materials

The Town is required, as per the Accessible Customer Service Standard, to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Alternate Formats

Alternate formats are other ways of publishing information besides regular print. Some of these formats can be used by everyone while others are designed to address the specific needs of a user.

The Town and the person with a disability may agree upon the format to be used for the document or information.

In the event the information is not generated by the Town or is supplied by a third party, the Town will make every effort to obtain the information from the third party in an alternate format and/or will attempt to assist the Elector by providing assistive equipment.

General Election Materials

Large Print – Printed material generated by the Town will be provided in Arial font, 11 point and shall be made available, upon request, in a font (print) size that is 16 to 20 points or larger.

Website – Information generated by the Town on the website in relation to the election will be compliant with WCAG 2.0 Level A, and allow for assistive software to be utilized. In addition, website font can be adjusted to aid the user in reading the information.

Video – Promotional and educational videos created for the 2014 municipal election shall incorporate audio and captioning.

7.2 Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Town's control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible.

In these instances of service disruptions, the Town shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

2014 Town of Ajax Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective locations and information shall also be posted on the Town website.

This notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible services in relation to this plan include voting places, election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the voting place.

In the event of disruptions to service or unforeseen circumstances that affect the accessibility of voting places during the advance vote or on Election Day, *notices of disruption* will be posted in real time:

- on the Town's website and election website
- on Facebook
- on Twitter
- at the site of the disruption
- where applicable, a media advisory will be issued

8. APPLICATION

All election officials shall receive internal training to exercise their duties, including content relative to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act accessibility standards, the Ontario Human Rights Code and health and safety practices.

Candidates must also have regard to the needs of electors with disabilities. Campaign offices, election materials and canvassing should all be reviewed in order ensure that they are fully accessible.

The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario has released several quick reference documents to assist candidates with accessible elections considerations:

- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation - Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Campaign Information and Communication](#)
- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation - Quick Reference Guide to Accessible Constituency, Riding Association, Central Party and Campaign Offices](#)
- [Count Us In: Removing Barriers to Political Participation - Quick Reference Guide to Accessible All Candidates Meetings](#)

9. ELECTION FEEDBACK

Pursuant to Section 4.6 of the Town of Ajax Accessible Customer Service Policy any individual has the opportunity to submit feedback regarding the provision of accessible customer service. This feedback can be submitted through regular mail, email, telephone, facsimile, or by using the Town's Customer Feedback Form, which is available to all staff, at all service counters and via the Town's website. Feedback about the manner in which election services are provided will be addressed using the same method.

2014 Town of Ajax Municipal Election Accessibility Plan

Telephone: 905-683-4550
TextNET: 1-866-460-4489
Fax: 905-683-1061
Email: elections@ajax.ca
In person: Town Hall, 65 Harwood Avenue South
Mail: Elections - Town Hall, 65 Harwood Ave. S., Ajax, ON L1S 2H9
Website: www.ajaxvotes2014.ca

All feedback pertaining to election services will be forwarded to the Election Deputy Returning Officer for response. In addition, staff working at Town facilities can complete the feedback form for submission on behalf of a person with a disability. All feedback will be responded to within five business days.

10. REPORTING

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, within 90 days after voting day, the Town Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Further election accessibility information can be found by visiting the Town's election website www.ajaxvotes2014.ca or by contacting any one of the following individuals:

Sarah Moore, Accessibility Coordinator/Election Support

905-619-2529, ext. 3347
1-866-460-4489 (TextNET)
sarah.moore@ajax.ca

Nicole Wellsbury, Deputy Clerk/Deputy Returning Officer

905-619-2529, ext. 3342
1-866-460-4489 (TextNET)
nicole.wellsbury@ajax.ca

Martin de Rond, Town Clerk/Returning Officer

905-619-2529, ext. 3336
1-866-460-4489 (TextNET)
martin.derond@ajax.ca

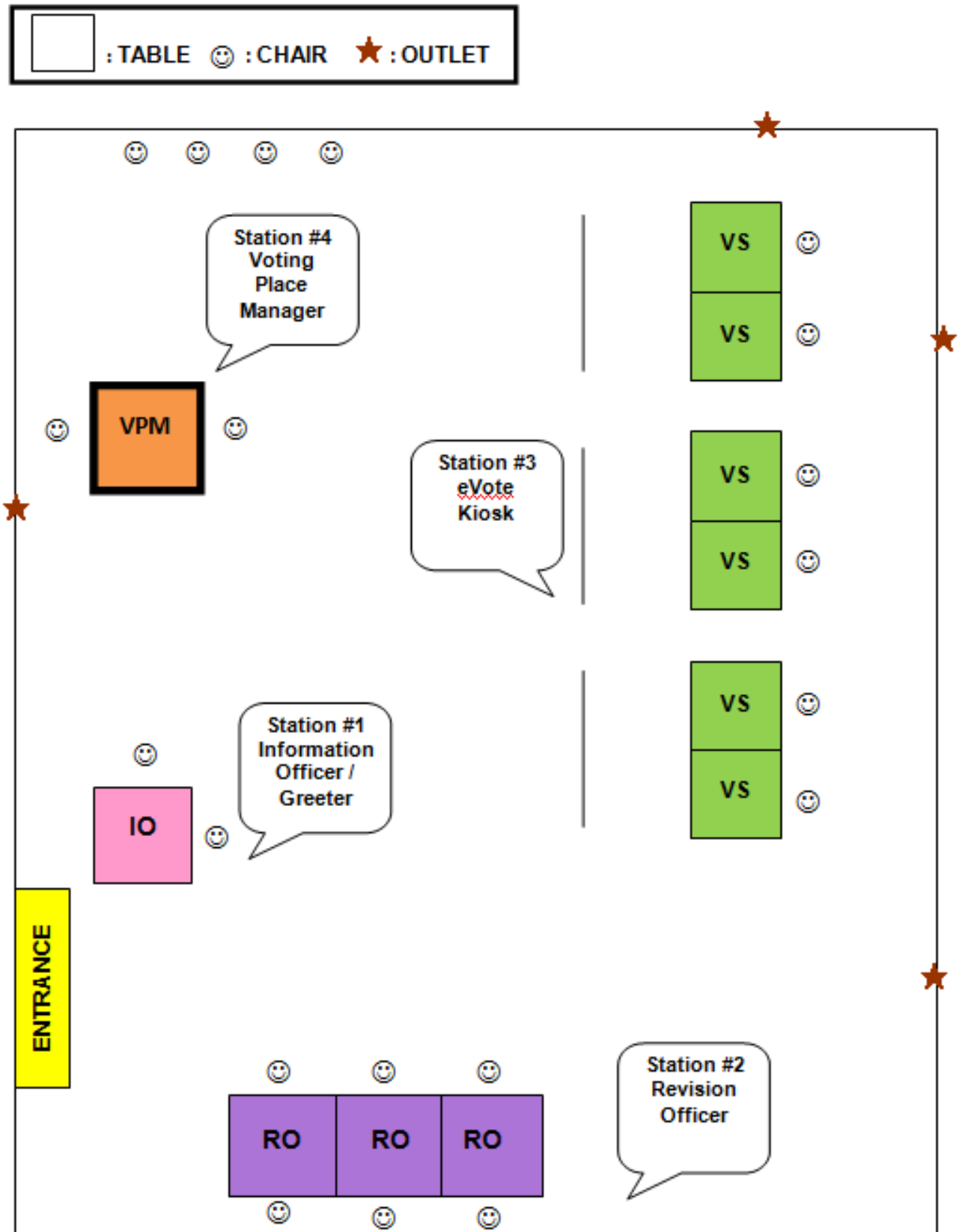
Brenda Kriz, Records Manager/Election Support

905-619-2529, ext. 3343
1-866-460-4489 (TextNET)
Brenda.kriz@ajax.ca

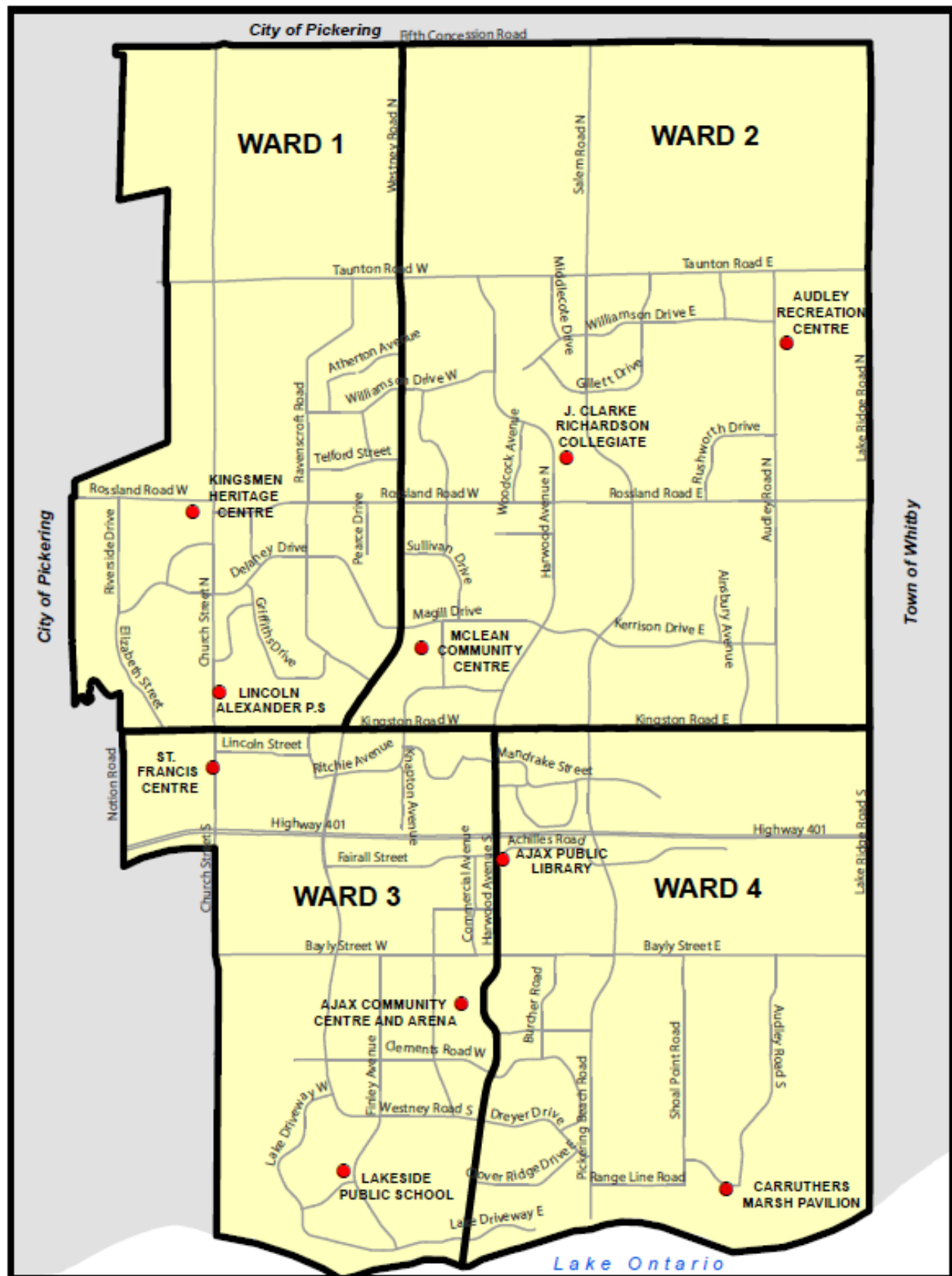
12. POLLING LOCATIONS

Site audits for all Polling Locations to be used in the 2014 Municipal Election shall be conducted by the 2014 Election Team. The purpose of the audits shall be to ensure that voting locations are conducive to the needs of election officials and voters. Site audit summary information sheets relative to each polling location will be attached to this planning document as **Appendix C**.

APPENDIX A – Polling Location Sample Floor Plan



APPENDIX B – Election Day Polling Location Map



APPENDIX C – Site Audit Information Summary Sheets

[Placeholder]

Seven Little Words

Written in bold, black capital letters, emblazoned on a fluorescent yellow background are seven little words. They speak volumes. But it's amazing how many people either don't see, or ignore, these words.

“Do not pet me I am working”

I am legally blind and have had the gift and privilege of working with an amazing service dog named Zoe for the past 6 years. She's exceptionally intelligent and skilled. She's kept me from being involved in a variety of types of accidents so many times I've lost count. She's incredibly friendly, and yes, she's also very beautiful. Those two last qualities – her friendliness and her good looks, while tremendous assets to have in a service dog are also the cause of countless problems for her and I.

Zoe wears a sign with those seven words, “Do not pet me I am working”, on her harness handle. Given its distinct look and position of prominence on her harness, I'm not certain how it's possible to miss it, but countless people have.

As someone with a visual impairment with a working dog, it's incredibly important when she is in working harness for her to stay focused and not become distracted. Having her focus interrupted could be the difference between safe passage and a catastrophic accident because she's momentarily lost her focus and has missed something crucial in the environment that puts both of us in jeopardy.

Allow me to give three examples of situations that have actually happened to me and why they were inappropriate and frustrating.

The first instance occurred in a doctor's waiting room. While it was not a situation where she was actively guiding me (as we were sitting waiting our turn to see the doctor), it was still important for her to remember that she was in working mode and therefore maintain working behavior and manners.

The door to the offices opened and a woman came into the waiting room. The instant she saw Zoe she made a direct beeline for her, knelt down and began petting her, talking to her – basically loving all over her.

Please don't misunderstand. When Zoe is not working she really is “just a dog”. She plays just as hard as she works, and I allow people I know to love on her abundantly. But, when she is working, I expect everyone, that includes my close friends and family, to respect the fact that I need her undivided attention and focus.

Rather than correct the woman right away (we were in a safe environment so instant correction wasn't crucial) I chose instead to wait to see how long it would take her to see the sign.

It took several minutes before the woman noticed Zoe's sign. When she did she actually asked me if the sign was a joke – and she was serious! Her comment upon leaving, was how totally ridiculous it was for me to expect people not to pet her, and how cruel I was to deny my dog affection.

A similar thing happened just two weeks ago. I went into a local restaurant to pick up a take-out order. As we entered Zoe took me to stand behind a couple that were already at the counter.

One of the individuals turned around and saw us. I could tell Zoe wanted to say hello, but I gave her a gentle correction, and she remained at my side. The woman seemed to sense that Zoe wanted to say hello.

The next moment the woman had bent down and had Zoe's head in her hands and was petting her and telling her how beautiful she was and what a good dog she was. As I'm not taken aback by things like this anymore, I politely pointed out to woman that Zoe was a working dog and was on duty, and indicated her sign. She seemed very surprised, and then said she hadn't seen the sign. She also seemed a little bit offended that I was asking her not to pet my dog, however she did back off, commenting how hard it was not to pet a dog when you see it, even if it is working.

The last incident was one where both Zoe and I could have gotten seriously hurt. I was waiting to cross the street across from the building where I live. There is no proper crossing there (and yes I do jaywalk), so it is always important that Zoe and I stop to listen for traffic, and that she is paying close attention to ensure that when we do begin to cross there is no oncoming traffic.

As we were waiting a neighbor we know saw us and began to call Zoe's name from across the street. Zoe immediately began to look around, wondering where it was coming from. I corrected her to leave it and pay attention, however the neighbor only began to call her name louder causing Zoe to become further distracted.

When we finally had safely crossed the neighbor approached on the sidewalk wanting to say hello. I had Zoe sit/stay beside me as I spoke to my neighbor, letting her know that I was really happy she loved and wanted to greet my dog, but in future if she could refrain from doing so until after we were safely across the street that would be helpful. I explained to her how it was crucial for Zoe to keep her focus on the task at hand to not jeopardize her, or my, safety. She was sincerely apologetic, saying she hadn't even thought of that, only that she had seen us and wanted to say hello.

Believe it or not, this is not the exception in my life, this is the norm. It's amazing how people in our society don't seem to be aware of even the basic etiquette when it comes to dealing with someone with a disability who has a service dog. I've done more educating of people about my disability since I got Zoe than I ever did when I was a white cane user.

I really do appreciate the fact that people see my dog and know that she is happy, well cared for and beautiful in looks and disposition. Being a dog person naturally myself, I do truly understand how difficult it can be to restrain yourself from petting a dog when you see one...but to me it just seems common sense that if you were to see one working to respect the boundaries that come with an individual with a service dog.

Hmmm...do you think a sound system with bells and whistles on the sign might help??

**2014 National Access Awareness Week Recognition
WORK PLAN May 25 – 31, 2014**



INITITAVE	ACTIONS	LEAD	PROJECT STATUS	FINISH TARGET	NOTES
Council Proclamation Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft speaking notes Deliver a brief presentation to Council on the origin of NAAW and 2014 recognition initiatives Receive proclamation certificate from Mayor 	D. Mullings K. Smith	Booked	May 12, 2014	Sarah may be unable to attend; will need a member present to take photos...
Group Volunteer Opportunity at Wind Reach Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate a group of Town staff/advisory committee members to visit Wind Reach Farms and volunteer for a morning/afternoon 	S. Moore AAC	In progress	Sun. May 25, Sat. May 31 or Sun. June 1	Wind Reach has been contacted; awaiting confirmation of opportunity availability and date.
Accessibility & Inclusion Workshop(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop content and activities (interaction) for a 40 minute presentation/workshop Resources/activities could include TeachAble Project materials, YouTube videos, try-its, art projects, etc 	S. Moore AAC	In progress	May 27 & 29	Invitations sent to all schools in Ajax; target two mornings with option for schools to invite AAC to visit year-round;
Accessibility for Business Toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Accessibility Opens Doors brochure Contact ADO for more resource materials Compile packages Coordinate delivery/pick-up Contact Lisa re: website posting/distribution at June 4, 2014 Ajax Business Network meeting 	S. Moore AAC Business Development Department	In progress	April 28, 2014	Business listing requested from Business Development Department; additional materials requested from ADO;
Film Screening - Ajax Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select inclusion-related film The Intouchables Cross-promote in APLibrary Newsletter/online AAC Info booth to be set-up at the screening 	S. Dodge (APLibrary) C. Fitsimmonds (APLibrary)	In progress	June 8, 2014 1 - 4 p.m. Rotary Room APL Main Branch	Confirmed Cathy is checking English subtitle availability, if not Sarah may need to purchase from Amazon.ca
Accessibility Try-it Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact equipment/devices providers for loan Develop task try-its (obstacle course, reading with goggles, jenga/lego with oven mitts, etc.) 	AAC J. Stevenson – CNIB B. Dowds – Shoppers HHC	In progress	May 26, 2014 6 - 8 p.m. Rotary Room APL Main Branch	Confirmed Need to check AAC availability with AAC Members & equipment booking. APLibrary to lead station demos; Cathy looking into give-aways from AROGA.
Informational Display at Ajax Public Library Main Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop list of accessibility/inclusion related films and books (for posting on web, hand-outs at APLibrary facilities) Coordinate promotion/demos of accessible workstation 	S. Dodge (APLibrary) C. Fitsimmonds (APLibrary) AAC	In progress	May 25 – 31 2014	APLibrary to lead displays and station demos; APL Read-Listen-Watch content due May 9

2014 National Access Awareness Week Recognition
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Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Event poster• Social media/website• News Advertiser Community Pages?• E-blast to community groups & AdComs	AAC Corporate Communications	Not started	May 2, 2014	Event Flyer due prior to Council Presentation; Community Pages Ad due week prior to circulation. APL Newsletter content due April 7
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2014 Accessibility Advisory Committee Work Plan

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Item		Objective	Timeline	Status
1.	<u>AODA Integrated Accessibility Standard Update</u> <i>Participation in consultation and review of Town of Ajax compliance with Integrated Accessibility Standards Requirements</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Formats Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy & Procedure Service Delivery Information & Communications 	Annual review May/June 2014	ongoing
2.	<u>End-of-term Committee Update Delegation to Council</u> <i>Review of recent committee achievements and future projects. Presented by Committee Chair and Members</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Delivery Community Partnerships Information & Communication 	May/June 2014	
3.	<u>Regional AAC Chairs Meeting</u> <i>Attendance at quarterly Regional AAC meetings with Committee Chairs and staff liaisons. Communication and participation in annual Regional Joint AAC Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Partnership Information & Communications 	Quarterly: Feb. 12/14 May 14/14 Aug. 20/14 Nov. 12/14	
4.	<u>National Access Awareness Week</u> <i>Discussion/brainstorming for 2014 event(s), Council proclamation & delegation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Partnership Information & Communications 	Planning: March/April 2014	
5.	<u>Multi-year Accessibility Plan (2014-2018)</u> <i>Review and comment on development and implementation of the accessibility plan document</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental & AAC consultation Public Meeting Annual status report to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy & Procedure Service Delivery Information & Communications Facilities & Infrastructure 	Annual Status Reporting: Fall 2014	
6.	<u>Taxi By-law Review</u> <i>Review and provide comment on Town's taxi by-law with attention to accessible taxi cabs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Delivery Policy & Procedure 	Dec/13 - Spring 2014	ongoing

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Item		Objective	Timeline	Status
7.	<u>2014 DREN Accessibility Award Nomination</u> <i>Nomination preparation and submission for annual Regional Accessibility Awards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnership • Information & Communications 	June 2014	
8.	<u>Volunteer Recognition Awards</u> <i>Nomination preparation and submission for annual Town of Ajax Volunteer Recognition Awards; participation in Award Selection Review Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnership • Information & Communications 	March 11, 2014	
9.	<u>Accessible Ajax Web Content</u> <i>Review existing content and provide feedback for additional elements to include</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Communication 		
10.	<u>Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee Newsletter</u> <i>Contribution of article/content submissions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partnerships • Information & Communication 		ongoing
11.	<u>Durham Transit Specialized Services</u> <i>Annual presentation and discussion of accessibility improvements to DRT services & specialized services, including compliance plans for the Integrated Accessibility Standards, OR 191/11 Transportation requirements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Procedure • Service Delivery • Community Partnerships 	Annual Update	
12.	<u>2014 Building Approvals/Site Plan Review</u> <i>Participate in review of major community and Town development proposals to provide feedback on accessibility elements.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities & Infrastructure 	Spring 2014	ongoing
13.	<u>Accessibility for Business Initiatives</u> <i>Review and revise Town of Ajax Accessibility Brochure to include information on importance of accessibility for local businesses.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Communications • Community Partnerships • Service Delivery 		ongoing

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	Item	Objective	Timeline	Status
14.	<u>Accessibility Resource Development</u> <i>Development of clear guidelines for staff and external clubs/organizations on the following topics:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible Ajax • Accessible event planning • Hosting an accessible meeting • Accessibility Opens Doors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Communications • Community Partnerships • Service Delivery 		
15.	<u>Strengthening Community Partnerships & Awareness</u> <i>Invitation of local accessibility related organizations to present educational information to the Committee; investigate and participate in Community events/presentations to build awareness/education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Communications • Community Partnerships • Service Delivery 	Wind Reach Farm March 2014	
16.	<u>Pan Am 2015</u> <i>Participation in Local Host Committee; review of site plan; potential community accessibility audit for visitors.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Communications • Community Partnerships • Service Delivery 	Monthly Local Host Committee Meetings	
17.	<u>2014 Municipal Election</u> <i>Participation in voting place locations site visits; review of the voting methods and election accessibility plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Procedure • Service Delivery • Information & Communications 		
18.	<u>Advisory Committee Review</u> <i>Participation in review of committee structure, mandate, terms of reference, appointment process, etc.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Procedure 	March 2014	