



MINUTES

Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, February 9, 2026
City Hall, Council Chambers

Present: Chad English, Chair
Heather Bird
Jackie Hummelbrunner
Mary Bawden, Co-Chair
Peggy Whitta
Councillor Van Belleghem

City Staff: Greg Breen, Director of Infrastructure & Operations, Tinotenda Mpofo, Project Manager, Stefan Stiller, Project Manager, Chris Lock, General Manager Capital Project Delivery, Kelly Galbraith, Manager of Customer Services/Deputy Clerk

1. Call to Order

Chad called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and Mary delivered a land acknowledgement.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

There were none declared.

3. Coney Island Playground Presentation

Greg introduced the staff members from the Capital Projects Team. A background on the existing play structure on Coney Island was given. Blue Imp has been selected as the designer and builder for the new playground on Coney Island. Greg introduced Zach Subercki of Blue Imp. Zach shared that Blue Imp is a proud, family owned and operated Canadian manufacturing company which meets or surpasses all criteria regarding all CSA safety standards and are ISO 9001:2015 certified as well as IPEMA certified. Zach presented the renderings and walked the committee through the play space and it's features.

The new play space will be the new hub for inclusive and accessible play. This brand-new play space highlights what it truly means to have an inclusive play space. A balance between high energy, challenging play, mixed with accessible routes, play features and calm zones, allowing everyone to play.

When you enter the boardwalk, find a revitalized walkway connection the boardwalk to the playground. This allows users in a mobility device to easily access the playground from the boardwalk, opposed to having to go through a surface such as grass or dirt. Once in the play space, we are welcomed by a Calm Zone, the Driftwood Den. Here we find an area to converse with friends and interact with sensory driven play elements. Brand-new panels such as Animal Tracks and Dump Truck Dash allow for imaginations

to run wild. Have a picnic with your friend at the Wee Table and tackle the finger maze on that tabletop. Spiral your way through the Spiral Puzzle and hear the soothing sound of rain with the Rainmaker. All ensuring we are shaded with the Rootz Roof.

The large play structure presents so many different elements. The ramps and play elements can be accessed using a mobility device. Two ramps are included, as the traditional one ramp doesn't allow for much play other than interactive panels at the 12" height. Adding that second ramp allows the user to reach higher heights and even remove themselves from the mobility device and use the 6' Gang Slide. The Gang Slide is the perfect slide for children to slide down with their caregivers, giving us a wide sliding Bedway. We elected to use stainless steel slides as they are more inclusive. With plastic, the static is very hard on children and adults with cochlear implants. At the lower first half, pretend you are a coffee shop owner with the Woodland Café while you serve two customers seated on the Toad Stool Seats. Test your memory with the Wildlife Memory Game and test your patience with the Marble Maze. That second half has a climber for the real littles to access from ground level, the Apex, and put on your mystery solving hat with the brand-new Secret Agent Panel. Finally, Mesmer-Eyes Panel is a fun panel that can really play some tricks on your eyes.

As we make our way to taller heights, we used accessible stairs, but also, that the deck increments were only 7" rather than a traditional 14". With a 7" rise, children can shift their way up to these taller heights if mobility is limited, complying with the accessibility requirements followed in the CSA standard regarding Annex H. Having the accessible stair from the 24" w/c Hex Deck, gets us to higher heights, quicker. We have the 12' Steel Triple Rail Wave which is a great inclusive piece. It fosters parallel play, as you invite your buddy to race you down the slide. Once back up, the Arch Bridge takes you to the highest section of the play structure where the thrill 15' deep dip slide endures. Feel the wind through your hair as you soar down this Bedway to the surface. A couple challenging climbers reside here with the Timber Trek, and the Ninja Wall. Be sure to get a good running jump when you tackle the Ninja Wall. Need a break? Have a seat on the Leaf Seat below the platforms. From that same spot where the double slide is, presents a different direction that can be taken for more challenging play. The Jungle Crossing is a rope bridge connecting us to our monkey bar section. The Earthquake, another rope link is great for more inclusive play as multiple users can climb, scale and clamber. Take the second arch bridge to the Wiggle Link, and up and through the Ogoogo. Swing vigorously round and round on the Swing-A-Ling. Stepping pods are used for balance and "functionally linking" the overheads to the Vine Climb. This method is great to harbour a classic game of "Grounders" or "The Floor is Lava". The all-new Swerve is also located in this area, a fun. Multi-coloured climber with plastic. If you're stuck at the surface on the east side, use the Escalader or the Cargo Net to get back on up! Nature theming such as the Butterfly and Leaf Window as well as the Evergreen Tree toppers bring nature to life and gives this structure a nice setting with Kenora's geographical landscape.

Finally, we have our swing set. Each swing seat on this swing set is designed for different capabilities and ages. First, we have the disc seat. This seat has proven to be super beneficial to children on the autism spectrum. Kids can lay on their backs, sprawled out, or on their tummy as their caregiver swings them gently, providing the soothing swinging motion. It also serves as a multi-user swing seat as multiple kids can sit on the edge and swing together. We then have the traditional belt and toddler seat in the next bay. Toddler seat for the littles, the belt seat for the older children. And finally, the all-new Duet Parent/Child Swing seat. One of the most desired swing seats on a swing

set, a seat that allows the parent/caregiver to sit in the same seat with the child and swing together. The child faces the adult, in a toddler seat, while the adult has the bench seat on the parallel side. A fully inclusive and accessible swing frame for all!

We elected to stick with the nature theme and utilize green rubber tile surfacing for more imaginable play. Kids can pretend they are playing on moss or spongy grass as they traverse through the playground. It is so important not to have just your playground accessible, but the surfacing accessible. This unitary surface is the perfect surface for this play space. Regarding Annex H, we have a minimum number of components that must be accessible between elevated and ground level. For this play space, we needed a minimum of 10 accessible elevated and 7 accessible ground level. We have 13 accessible elevated and 10 accessible ground level.

The goal of an inclusive playground is to create a multi-faceted, sensory-rich play space where all children—regardless of their abilities, ages, needs or skill levels—can enjoy unstructured outdoor play. Inclusive play does not mean that every element of play is available to every child. It involves incorporating a wide diversity of equipment to enable physical activity as well as sensory, imaginative, cognitive and social play—so that the combination of experiences is rewarding for each child. It's all about maximizing enjoyment for as many users as possible!

Only 14% of Canadian children with disabilities have mobility challenges, so it's important to find ways to engage children with other exceptionalities, including vision, hearing, dexterity, developmental, neurodiversity, etc.

- Incorporating diverse forms of sensory play at ground level provides enjoyment for all children
- Components that make sound or supply tactile play are enjoyable for users with visual impairments
- Components that rock or sway may help over-stimulated children to self-regulate
- Stainless steel slides prevent damage to cochlear implants worn by hearing-impaired children
- Alternating colours on platforms, steps and ramps help visually impaired users navigate changes in height

Discussion:

Seating was discussed. It was asked if it is possible to have seating on the other side of the boardwalk facing out to the playground. Greg shared he would take that away and review the budget to see if it can be incorporated. It was asked if Blue Imp gets user input for consumer driven design. Occupational Therapists are consulted on new product design and market research is conducted on what is currently in the field to see what users are happy with and on the contrary, what can be improved. Frustrations were expressed with stairs being incorporated into the design. To have all ramps it would require a 36 foot of ramp or switchbacks. The stairs are wide and the rise has been considered so there are positive aspects depending on the child's ability. Greg shared his team will take the comments back and see what is possible. Construction will begin once the ice is off the lake and it is anticipated the playground will be operational by July.

4. Adopt Minutes of Previous Meeting – November 26, 2025

Moved By Mary Bawden, Seconded by Heather Bird and Carried –

That the Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held November 26, 2025, be confirmed as written and filed.

5. Election of Chair and Co-Chair

Moved By Mary Bawden, Seconded by Chad English and Carried –

That Jackie Hummelbrunner be appointed as Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remainder of the committee's term.

Moved By Heather Bird, Seconded by Jackie Hummelbrunner and Carried –

That Mary Bawden be appointed as the Co-Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the remainder of the committee's term.

Discussion:

As required in the committee's terms of reference, an election for Chair and Co-Chair is held at the first committee meeting of the calendar year. Chad has been a long-time committee member and Chair. He is interested in stepping down from the role of Chair while continuing to be a committee member and provide input. The committee and staff thanked Chad for his many years of dedication to the committee as Chair. Jackie was nominated and appointed as Chair, and Mary was nominated and appointed as Co-Chair.

6. Meeting frequency, date and time

As required in the committee's terms of reference, the meeting frequency, dates and time is to be determined at the first committee meeting of the calendar year. The second Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm has been as the meeting date and time for the remainder of the committee's term.

7. National AccessAbility Week (May 24-May 30, 2026) – Sticker Contest

The details for the sticker contest were finalized. Winners will be selected at the April 9th committee meeting.

8. Roundtable

It was shared there was a citizen inquiry regarding the City's ice policy for wheelchairs and the person pushing the wheelchair on ice. Kelly will take this away and bring it forward to the next meeting.

9. Next Meeting – Thursday, March 12, 2026

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.