

MINUTES

Date: Thursday, January 22, 2026

Location: Committee Room #415 & Microsoft Teams

Time: 9:00 a.m.

9:14 a.m. The meeting convened with M. Sylvester, Chair presiding.

Attendance:

Members

Michelle Sylvester, Chair

Catherine Topping, Vice Chair

Councillor Rose Gibson

Sheila Rodaway

John Allen

Joe Docherty Jr. (Departed 9:53 a.m.)

Ed Vandermaarel (Departed 10:27 a.m.)

Amanda Stark (Departed 9:17 a.m.)

City Officials

Jon Hindley, Deputy City Clerk

Absent

Sarah Savoie

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Catherine Topping declared a pecuniary interest relating to Accessibility Concerns - Thumbs Up as she is a member of the organization and refrained from all discussion and action relating to the matter.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by E. Vandermaarel - S. Rodaway:

THAT: The minutes of the meeting held on November 27, 2025, be confirmed.

Carried.

REPORTS of COMMITTEES

1. Budget

The Deputy City Clerk advised that approximately \$1,400 of swag items were purchased out of the 2025 budget for future events and that nothing had been spent in 2026.

2. Special Events

Ms. Rodaway provided an overview of recently approved events, including the Railway City Music & Arts Festival, Railway City Road Races and the Coldest Night of the Year walk.

The members inquired whether an application had been submitted for the Shamrock Shuffle event.

The Deputy City Clerk advised that he would follow up with the Special Events Committee.

3. Site Plan Control

The Vice Chair advised that no new applications had been made.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Committee Mandate

The Chair advised that some preliminary research had been done on other committee's mandate documents and that a sub-committee meeting would be scheduled to review.

The Deputy City Clerk advised that he would send Council's updated Procedural by-law to the members for their information.

2. St. Thomas MAAC Shirts for City Events

The members discussed ordering red shirts that had both the City's logo and wording identifying the Committee's name.

The Deputy City Clerk advised that he would reach out to the City's vendor to confirm pricing before the next meeting.

3. Age Friendly Community Information

The Deputy City Clerk advised that a recent press release from Southwestern Public Health announced that Elgin-St. Thomas has been recognized as an age-friendly community.

The members discussed inviting someone involved in the Age Friendly Community committee to a future meeting of this committee.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Accessibility Concerns - Thumbs Up

Adrian Williams, Chair, Thumbs Up St. Thomas Committee was in attendance to discuss accessibility concerns that were brought to their attention at the 2025 Open House event as some relate to municipal facilities.

Mr. Williams provided an overview of the submitted concerns, including businesses with no ramps or malfunctioning accessible buttons for doors, lack of a curb cut and narrowness of sidewalk along the side of the Marks store heading toward the bus stop, accessibility concerns at the Princess Avenue Playhouse, lack of accessible public washrooms on the fourth and fifth floors of the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital, sidewalk heaving throughout the City, lack of upright accessible parking signs at the Joe Thornton Community Centre and Valleyview Home, lack of appropriate curb cuts at the Joe Thornton Community Centre, accessibility concerns at the Elgin Centre and multi-floor buildings with no elevators.

J. Allen advised that the Elgin Theatre Guild is reviewing funding opportunities for accessibility improvements at the Princess Avenue Playhouse and that it could be helpful for Thumbs Up to conduct an audit of the facility.

The Chair advised that the washroom issue at the hospital had been discussed previously and that these floors are not specifically for the public, but that there is an accessibility person that could be contacted.

The members discussed that while some issues mentioned are on private property which limits the committee’s jurisdiction, some items could be reviewed.

The Deputy City Clerk advised that he would follow up with some service requests and inquiries as appropriate.

2. Response from The Honourable Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility

The members acknowledged receipt of the response from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

3. Draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update & Community & Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study

The members discussed the feedback opportunities provided at Open Houses later today and available through e-mail relating to the draft documents.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for February 26, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room #415 and via Microsoft Teams.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Signed, Chair, Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee

Date