



Report
Staff Report
 The Corporation of the City of Brampton
 2/25/2025

Date: 2025-01-29

Subject: **Accessibility Awards Program Update**

Contact: Sylvia Ingham, Accessibility Coordinator, City Clerk's Office

Report number: Legislative Services-2025-111

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from Sylvia Ingham, Accessibility Coordinator, City Clerk's Office to the Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting of February 25, 2025, re: **Accessibility Awards Program Update**, be received;
2. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) direct staff to relaunch the Accessibility Awards program in one of the following formats:
 - I. That the Accessibility Awards Program remain as a program administered by the AAC and City Clerk's Office staff; or
 - II. That the Accessibility Awards be included in the Citizen Awards as a sub-category or new category.

OVERVIEW:

- **The Accessibility Awards Program is administered by the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and City Clerk's Office staff.**
- **The most recent awards were presented in 2021.**
- **At its September 10, 2024 meeting, AAC members requested that staff investigate and report back to the Committee regarding the possibility of including the Accessibility Awards with the Citizen Awards as:**
 - **A sub-category of an existing award, or**
 - **A new category**

BACKGROUND:

The Accessibility Awards Program was established in 2018 to recognize individuals, businesses and not-for-profit organizations in Brampton that make outstanding contributions towards accessibility. The AAC has ownership of the program and administers all aspects of the award process with the support of City Clerk's Office staff. Typically, the awards are presented at the December meeting of the AAC. An award is given to the winner in each category: an individual, a business, and not-for-profit organization.

Accessibility awards were presented at AAC's December meeting in 2018, 2019 and 2020. In 2021, award winners and nominees were recognized at a meeting of Council. A virtual "meet and greet" meeting was held prior to the Council meeting. The program was paused in 2022 due to resourcing constraints in relation to the municipal election. In May 2023 (during National AccessAbility Week), an Accessibility Business Networking event was held in lieu of the Accessibility Awards. Accessibility Awards were not presented in 2023 and 2024.

At its September 10, 2024 meeting, the AAC passed the following resolution:

AAC009-2024

1. That staff continue with the preparation of an Accessibility Awareness event as planned for December 2024; and,
2. That it is the position of the Accessibility Advisory Committee that staff consider the comments and feedback discussed at the meeting and report back with options to re-establish the Accessibility Awards event going forward.

CURRENT SITUATION:**Accessibility Awards Program**

The Accessibility Awards Program is a standalone award, where the AAC has ownership of the program and sets criteria for the award. Nominations are reviewed by a sub-committee of AAC. Under the current structure, the program offers flexibility for recognizing nominees in many categories, such as a community member, group, business, and not-for-profit organization.

Citizen Awards

Citizen Awards are administered by the Events and Protocol Office. The criteria is set and nominations are reviewed by a committee consisting of the Mayor and two Councillors. One award is presented in each category: Sports Achievement, Ken Giles Athlete of the Year, Arts Acclaim, Long Term Service, Inspirational, Emergency Services Award of Valour, and Citizen of the Year. The nomination period is from November to January of the following year, with the award presentation taking place at the Rose Theatre in May.

Relaunching the Accessibility Awards

The following options are available for consideration:

Standalone Awards Program

In this option, the existing format of the awards program will continue – the program will be administered by the AAC with the support of the Clerk’s Office. A sub-committee of the AAC will be established to review nominations, and awards will be presented at the December 2025 meeting of the AAC.

Including the Accessibility Award with the Citizen Awards

The option to include an Accessibility Award within the existing Citizen Awards program is possible, however would require Council approval. While including accessibility within the Citizen Awards may help to amplify and raise awareness for accessibility, in this option, the AAC would likely have less involvement in the administration of the award, and there would not be any flexibility regarding the date or location of the award presentation. As Council determines the number of awards presented, it may not be possible to recognize a recipient in the different categories in the current framework.

Keeping the Standalone Awards and Adding an Accessibility Category to the Citizen Awards

Keeping the existing Accessibility Awards Program and adding “accessibility” as a category in the Citizen Awards may create some duplication between the two awards programs, as well as create confusion amongst nominees and the public, and as such is not a recommended solution. There may be overlap in the nomination periods of the two programs and differences in selection criteria. Some nominees may be precluded from applying for an award. Having two standalone awards programs amplifies the prestige of each award and recognition of the public in each category. Duplicating efforts may impact the prestige and importance of the Accessibility Awards Program.

Awards Programs in Other Municipalities

The way in which accessibility awards are administered amongst municipalities varies greatly. The following table shows a sample of existing programs, and how they are administered:

Municipality	Program	Administration
Fort Erie	Business Excellence Award for Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Reviews nominations sponsored by AAC
Guelph	Access Recognition Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by Mayor at Council meeting • Accessibility staff involvement
Hamilton	Accessibility Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities • AAC selects nominees and successful recipients
Kawartha Lakes	Accessibility Awareness Recognition Awards (includes employees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by AAC
London	Accessibility (i.e. contributions to foster an environment of inclusion that embraces citizens of all abilities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor's Honour List • Recommending Committee is AAC
Peterborough	Community Recognition Awards – Accessibility is a category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peterborough County Awards and Bursaries Committee •
Sarnia	Accessibility Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC administers
Toronto	Disability Access Award – includes new/renovated structure; employment program; transportation system; recreation/leisure program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol & External Relations

Staff is seeking direction from the AAC regarding relaunching the Accessibility Awards Program for 2025, and whether it should continue as a standalone program or be combined with the Citizen Awards program.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:**Financial Implications:**

The expenses related to the existing Accessibility Awards Program is minimal. The cost of including Accessibility Awards with the Citizen Awards is to be determined by the Events and Protocol Office.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:

The Accessibility Awards promote Brampton's commitment to reducing and preventing barriers to accessibility and supports the strategic focus area of Culture and Diversity.

CONCLUSION:

The Accessibility Awards Program is an important initiative that highlights achievements of community members and creates awareness around accessibility. The program should continue as either a standalone program or be included in the Citizen Awards.

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