

Committee: **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Organization/Sector represented: **Person with disability (Acquired Brain Injury)**

Name: **Michael Cairns**

Address:

**633 Waterloo St. -Upper
London Ontario N6B2R6**

Occupation: **Not employed**

Work experience: **Prior to my accident I was employed in London for a Member of Provincial Parliament and also worked in customer service for a national credit card company.**

Education: **3 year college diploma in Business Finance.**

Skills: **As I am living with an acquired brain injury from a severe car accident in 2007, I have had to learn how to do all my day to day activities all over again. I learned how to cope and manage my disability while living my new life with as much normalcy as possible. I was very active, fully employed and engaged in many volunteer activities in London before my accident. Since the accident, I have not been able to work; however, I have been doing as much volunteer work as I can. For the past two and a half years I have been living independently. In the beginning, I required a lot of assistance navigating the city with the transit system and using community programs and facilities. Today I have reduced my need for assistance and feel that I can bring a unique perspective to this committee to help others.**

Interest reason: **I would like to help make life in our city a little bit easier for others who may be experiencing similar challenges to what I have faced. I wish to help foster and communicate ideas, concerns and solutions to our elected officials from people that have disabilities.**

Contributions: **To people that don't know me, I appear not to have any deficits. But just because I am living independently, does not mean my recovery is complete. I have had to learn and develop personal strategies which I still use to complete tasks that others take for granted- grocery shopping, cooking, even planning and organizing my daily chores. Living with an invisible disability comes with many challenges, and ensuring an accessible society goes much further than the 'traditional' accessibility measures that most of us think of. My personal experience has provided me with a great deal of insight into a less obvious concept of accessibility and inclusion, and I look forward to helping reduce barriers for people living with all types of disabilities.**

Past contributions: **Since my accident I have served in on the boards of the North Bay Brain Injury Association and the Powassan United Church council.**

Interpersonal: **Working on the North Bay Brain Injury association, I helped communicate and share challenges of going through a brain injury with many people that had severe injuries and therapists in a group setting. Recently I volunteered on a municipal mayoralty campaign that had people of varying political backgrounds come together. I helped coordinate the sign campaign that brought together people of assorted skill levels, experience and time commitments to put up signs throughout the city in a successful campaign.**

Interview interest: **Yes**