

MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
WEDNESDAY, 2020-SEP-30, AT 3:00 P.M.

- Present: Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair
Councillor Z. Maartman
A. Breen, At Large Member (joined electronically)
S. Cameron, At Large Member (joined electronically)
L. Derksen, At Large Member (joined electronically)
R. Harlow, At Large Member (joined electronically)
D. Hollins, At Large Member (joined electronically)
J. Maffin, At Large Member (joined electronically)
E. Williamson, At Large Member
- Absent: S. Hamel, At Large Member
L. Malbon, At Large Member
R. Pike, At Large Member
- Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
L. Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services
B. Thomas, Assistant Manager, Transportation
M. Koch, Active Transportation Project Specialist
K. Kronstal, Social Planner
C. Barr, Communications and Marketing Specialist (joined electronically)
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
K. Gerard, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING TO ORDER:

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2020-JUL-29, at 3:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

4. PRESENTATIONS:

a. REIMAGINE NANAIMO - Introduction for the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Karin Kronstal, Social Planner, provided the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness with a PowerPoint presentation regarding ReImagine Nanaimo. Highlights included:

- The goal of REIMAGINE NANAIMO is to update many City plans based on community feedback and engagement
- Staff had to adapt to COVID-19 regulations by using interactive tools, online idea boards and online surveys
- Phase 1 is in progress, which includes COVID-19 friendly engagement activities, marketing tools to get the community involved and pop-up kiosks around parks and trails
- Community members can sign up for project updates and can receive up-to-date emails by subscribing to REIMAGINE NANAIMO through www.getinvolvednanamo.ca
- Online community mapping includes building a collective picture of what the community enjoys about Nanaimo and ideas for the future
- Social media platform allows residents to view posts and responses from other community members and share their own ideas
- Online input questionnaires are open to all residents and include one main questionnaire and/or six specific topic questionnaires
- Static stations and pop-up tents were set up outdoors from August 4th to September 4th and are ongoing with times and locations posted on the City of Nanaimo Facebook page
- Further outreach includes working with Literacy Nanaimo and mail outs, for those who are unable to take the survey online or have difficulties with the surveys

Committee discussion took place regarding ReImagine Nanaimo. Highlights included:

- Direct mail out will include all areas of Nanaimo
- Ensuring that the surveys are fully accessible to all residents and using simple language

Karin Kronstal, Social Planner, continued her presentation:

- Literacy Nanaimo is working to make a scaled down version of the survey based on different reading levels
- All surveys are online now with backgrounders which are a summary to introduce key topics
- The survey results will be the starting points for discussions and more community engagement
- The Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce and other businesses are helping market the REIMAGINE NANAIMO surveys and engagement

- Staff are reaching out to local groups and organizations to discuss how to better connect with their clientele
- A kids activity book is being distributed by School District #68
- City Staff have presented to the Vancouver Island University (VIU) Masters of Planning class and would like to present to school age children, seven to fourteen
- Requesting that Committee members provide Staff with feedback on two key elements:
 - What do you think is Nanaimo's one biggest opportunity to embrace in the coming years?
 - What do you think is Nanaimo's one biggest challenge to tackle in the coming years?

Committee discussion took place. Highlights include:

- Nanaimo Family Life has reached out to the City of Nanaimo (the City) and asked to assist in connecting with the elderly population
- Connecting with the Vice President of Community Relations at VIU
- Ensuring that all demographic groups including homeless community, Indigenous, the Pride Society and LGBTQIA2S+ have representation in the survey and engagement
- Requested that the two key questions from the presentation be placed on the 2020-NOV-25 Agenda for discussion

b. Madeleine Koch, Active Transportation Project Specialist, re: "Intro to the City's Transportation Group"

Madeleine Koch, Active Transportation Project Specialist, provided the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness with a PowerPoint presentation titled "Intro to the City's Transportation Group". Highlights included:

- Reviewed the role of the Transportation department including maintenance and development of sidewalks, roads and bike lanes
- The work the Transportation department does is guided by City plans, design standards and availability of resources
- The Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan (the Plan) includes safety, mobility, accessibility, connectivity, sustainability and affordability
- The priorities of the Plan includes pedestrians, bicycles, transit, commercial vehicles and cars
- The Plan focuses development around major transportation hubs in the City
- Recently adopted the Complete Streets standards which supports a high standard of accessibility
- Limited resources such as budget means that Staff must prioritize projects that will have the greatest positive impact
- Accessibility and inclusion in transportation include a heightened awareness of the critical importance of accessibility and inclusiveness in city services
- Future transportation planning will include the suggestions and feedback from the REIMAGINE NANAIMO initiative and public engagement

1. Questions for Discussion re: Transportation

1. What are the biggest challenges with accessibility and inclusion in Nanaimo's transportation system?
2. What are the biggest opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion in Nanaimo's transportation system?

Committee discussion took place regarding challenges with accessibility and inclusion in Nanaimo's transportation system. Highlights included:

- Trailheads are inaccessible for people with wheelchairs because of bollards which are meant to keep out dirt bikes
- Ensuring sidewalks are cleared during snow falls as it causes people using scooters or wheelchairs to be housebound
- Finding ways to encourage more people to walk or cycle instead of being so reliant on vehicles
- Transit system lacks flexibility and access to certain areas which decreases the options for people looking for affordable housing who do not own vehicles
- The City works closely with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to move, add or remove transit stops in and around Nanaimo
- Bus stops are not visible or clearly marked, no room for ramps and are poorly designed in some areas in regards to safety
- Concerns regarding crosswalk indicator buttons include:
 - Placement is set back from the road and not easily accessible for people in wheelchairs and those who use walkers
 - Branches and shrubs are overgrown hiding the indicator button
 - Steep crosswalk islands close to the road

Madeleine Koch, Active Transportation Project Specialist, advised the Committee that, the City has applied for a grant that, if awarded, will provide money for accessibility improvements to bus stops. Ms. Koch stated that the funding provided could improve eight to ten bus stops in Nanaimo and research is currently taking place to see which bus stops this funding would be applied to if awarded to the City.

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Scent sensitivity on busses
- Designing bus stops for safety and accessibility
- Input in curb cuts and ensuring curb cuts are accessible

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, advised the Committee that currently, there is no remediation plan for curb cuts in Nanaimo and curbs are removed or reset based on complaints from the public. The Transportation department could create a list or program to address these types of accessibility issues.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council direct Staff to make all transit stops within the City of Nanaimo uniform and highly visible so they are accessible for all citizens. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council direct Staff to prepare a bylaw which prevents garbage cans and recycling cans from being placed on sidewalks, in order to improve accessibility in the City of Nanaimo. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

(a) Leisure Economic Access Pass (LEAP)

Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, advised Committee members that the deadline for suggestions and feedback from members has been extended to October 31, 2020, and encouraged all members to provide feedback.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Treat Accessibly Program

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Video states that the Federal and Provincial Governments are on board with the proposal
- The City's role in the initiative is marketing and communications to the public
- Signs can be picked up Remax offices and Home Depot
- The program promotes accessibility and is safer for kids to stay at the curb with their parents to collect candy

Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture, advised that the Parks and Recreation Staff would look at ways to promote the Treat Accessibly program throughout Nanaimo.

(b) Committee Roundtable

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Focus on diversity and inclusion at the next meeting, as accessibility has been the focus of the past couple of meetings
- Process for taking action and making motions, best use of time and best way to help the community
- Requesting members of different community groups such as the Pride Society, LGTBQIA2S+ and service providers speak at Committee meetings
- Forward ideas, suggestions or recommendations regarding accessibility or inclusion to the Legislative Services department and they will forward to the correct Staff member for response

Future meeting topics:

- Check in with all Committee members
- Diversity and inclusion

Sky Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer, advised the Committee that the Legislative Services department would follow up with members who have not been attending meetings to inquire if they are still interested in being members of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:40 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER