

**MINUTES**  
SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, 2021-MAY-26, AT 4:01 P.M.

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- Present: Councillor Maartman, Chair (joined electronically)  
Councillor Armstrong (joined electronically)  
A. Breen, 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)  
R. Pike, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
E. Williamson, At Large Member (joined electronically)
- Absent: S. Cameron, At Large Member  
L. Derksen, At Large Member  
S. Hamel, At Large Member
- Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture (joined electronically)  
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works (joined electronically)  
L. Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture (joined electronically)  
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services (joined electronically)  
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation (joined electronically)  
D. Blackwood, Client Support Specialist (joined electronically)  
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer (joined electronically)  
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary (joined electronically)

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

The Special Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

3. PRESENTATIONS:

a. Jacquelyn Novak, TOA Consulting, re: Adaptive Sport

Jacquelyn Novak, TOA Consulting, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- TOA Consulting is working with the City of Nanaimo, as well as different stakeholder groups, in the area of sport tourism
- Key initiatives and projects focused on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility
- Removing barriers to sport and tourism
- New accessibility legislation, if passed, will allow BC to establish accessibility standards aimed at identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and inclusion
- Opportunities as a community to better engage and support adaptive sport and accessible recreation
- A lot of work to do around awareness, education and engagement with user groups
- Working to identify and assess funding opportunities
- Identifying quick wins for Nanaimo
- Finding opportunities for pilot projects in Nanaimo
- Spinal Cord BC is offering foundational training on universal design and accessibility
- Purpose of the universal design training is to provide knowledge to incorporate universal design into programming, facility design, construction and maintenance programs
- Identifying opportunities for Nanaimo to better engage in and support adaptive sport and accessible recreation
- Goal of the Nanaimo Inclusive Trails Project is to assess the region's trail network and infrastructure through the lens of accessibility and inclusion, with the goal of creating more universal outdoor recreation spaces and opportunities to enhance the trail network for all users
- Seeking gap identification and recommendations to help boost the trail network in the region
- Funding to create additional jobs to support skill development of persons with disabilities

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Engagement with Indigenous communities
- Large number of trails fall within the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)
- Pilot with a smaller trail in Nanaimo and expanding into transit (improving accessibility to the trail)
- Westwood Lake Park lacks accessibility all the way around the trail
- Potentially arranging presentation from Jacquelyn Novak, TOA Consulting, to the RDN Parks and Trails Committee
- Finding a balance among trail users and accommodating not only sports and recreation users, but also people who seek to enjoy the natural habitat
- Limited accessibility to some benches at Colliery Dam that are set off the paved path
- Clearly communicating the accessibility of spaces

4. REPORTS:

(a) Leisure Economic Access Policy (LEAP) Program Review - Phase 3

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

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding the LEAP Program Review. Highlights included:

- Outlined proposed recommended changes to the LEAP program for potential implementation by September 2021
  - Reduce stigma by changing the name of the program
  - Reduce supporting documentation needed to apply
  - Give flexibility to the requirements
  - Create an online self assessment eligibility tool
  - Provide the application form/process online
  - Work with Literacy Central Vancouver Island to proof read materials
  - Reduce stigma by offering private appointments with recreation coordinators for applicants who wish to discuss the program
  - Extend the requirement to reapply, from every year to every two years, for people whose situation is unlikely to change
  - Provide opportunity to renew drop-in pass
  - Create a marketing and communication plan to improve community awareness
  - Create enhanced program information materials
  - Target measures to re-evaluate the program
- Outlined proposed recommended changes to the LEAP program that would require further exploration:
  - Expand eligibility to included post-secondary students and partnership with Vancouver Island University
  - Provide alternate options to show proof of need

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Applaud the work that has been done for the LEAP program review
- Not in support of changing the name of the program and consideration for having to update all related documents with a new name
- Ability for non-profits and care providers to write referrals to the program
- Non-profit groups would be great partners in marketing the program
- Post-secondary students provided access to the program
- In addition to the online application form, it is important to still have opportunity to apply at a facility front desk
- Introducing a mechanism to appeal a decision
- Making the process as easy as possible to give many users the opportunity to access the program
- Expanding the requirement to reapply to five years, rather than two, for individuals with permanent disabilities

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness approve the recommendations, with revisions, in the LEAP Program Review and recommend Staff forward them to Council for consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Allocation of Pedestrian Budget to Enhance Accessibility

Introduced by Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation:

- Allocation of the remainder of the pedestrian unallocated funds
- Identifying projects that will have a significant impact in the community

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Annual collision statistics to identify accident prone intersections
- Transit stops where the curb makes it difficult for people with walkers
- Disability parking at the BC Services building on Selby Street
- Tactile panel to identify bus stops helpful for people with low vision
- The use of grooves instead of rumble strips to avoid people getting caught up on the rumble strips
- Working with transit company to contribute funds towards transit accessibility
- Supportive of the list of proposed accessibility upgrades to transit stops listed in Attachment B of the report
- The use of high contrast paint to aid individuals with low vision
- Adding covered areas at the more frequently used bus stops

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend the following allocations of Pedestrian Unallocated Funds for Council's consideration:

- \$200,000 for transit stop accessibility improvements
- \$250,000 for traffic signal accessibility improvements
- \$45,000 for miscellaneous accessibility improvements allocated to the Small Scale Road Improvement budget.

The motion carried unanimously.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Proposed Recommendations from Sarah Cameron

Introduced by Deborah Hollins, At Large Member.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council and municipal Staff adopt the use of pronouns in all written and electronic communications. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that the City of Nanaimo use gender-inclusive and gender-neutral language, including communications, print and electronic materials. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that the City of Nanaimo update and revise all print and electronic materials to include the use of gender-inclusive and gender-neutral language. The motion carried unanimously.

Deborah Hollins disconnected from the meeting at 5:25 p.m. stating a conflict of interest as she works at an agency that offers diversity and inclusion training.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that the City of Nanaimo arrange for the availability of diversity and inclusion training for Council members and City Staff. This would include both LGBTQIA2+ and gender competency training, either online or in-person workshops, or both. The motion carried unanimously.

Deborah Hollins rejoined the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

(b) Richard Harlow re: Pedestrian Island to Accommodate Bike Lanes

Introduced by Richard Harlow, At Large Member:

- The concern regarding floating transit stops was brought to his attention by a member of the community
- Support for the bike lanes; however, need to ensure safety for people, who are vision impaired, trying to cross to the floating transit stops

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, spoke regarding the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal case in Victoria. A solution is to be determined; however, Staff are addressing the situation in the mean time with signage directing cyclists to yield to pedestrians.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Motion censored lights to indicate to cyclists that a pedestrian is crossing
- Setting funds aside for any future resolution that comes out of the tribunal case in Victoria

(c) Checkered Eye - Low Vision Proposal

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

Laara Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services, informed the Committee that the checkered eye proposal was brought forward by a member of the community.

- The purpose of the Checkered Eye project is for individuals with low vision to have a button to wear to identify themselves as having low vision

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Training and awareness for the community to understand what to do when they see the button
- Would take time for this symbol to gain recognition
- Vision impairment logos and symbols currently in use (white cane and guide dog) and difficulty in communicating what the checkered eye indicates
- Using an existing day, that recognizes vision impairment, as an avenue for education
- Not having to always place the onus on the individual with the disability to indicate their disability
- Concerns from Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) regarding the checkered eye proposal

(d) Correspondence, dated 2021-MAY-12, re: Handicap Parking at BC Service Location

Councillor Maartman noted that this correspondence was provided for information.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Spinal Cord Injury BC Universal Design Workshop

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Staff return to the Committee with a report outlining the possibility and feasibility for members of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness and interested City of Nanaimo Staff to participate in the Spinal Cord Injury BC Universal Design Workshop. The motion carried unanimously.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:50 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER