

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 2021-NOV-24, AT 4:03 P.M.

Present: Councillor Z. Maartman, Chair (joined electronically)
Councillor S. Armstrong, (joined electronically, disconnected 5:39 p.m.)
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)
R. Pike, At Large Member (joined electronically)
E. Williamson, At Large Member (joined electronically)

Absent: S. Hamel, At Large Member

Staff: D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
L. Wark, Director, Recreation Services
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services
C. Davis, Manager, Parks Operations
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation
J. Knight, Capital Project Management Specialist
K. MacDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner
K. Robertson, Deputy City Clerk
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 4:03 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

(a) Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation Services, added the following items under Agenda Item 7 – Other Business:

1. Universal Design Workshop Reminder
2. Nanaimo Aquatic Center Water Feature Review

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Committee Meeting held virtually, on Wednesday, 2021-SEP-22, at 4:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Nanaimo Trails Assessment Project

Wynn Holmberg, Project Manager, Nanaimo Inclusive Trails Project, KASA, Inclusive by Design, and Jacquelyn Novak, Director, TOA Consulting, spoke regarding the Nanaimo Trails Assessment Project. Highlights included:

- Members of the Nanaimo Inclusive Trails Project conducted a tour of the trails in and around Nanaimo and started the project with the goal of enhancing Nanaimo's trail system through a lens of access and inclusion
- The project has created employment opportunities through the BC Government Job Creation program
- Stakeholders and user groups have taken part in the project to set a baseline and definition for what inclusive trails mean to the community
- Project members will create an inventory of existing trails and assessing these trails for standards that can be applied for all community members
- Mountain bike standards are a key factor as the adapted mountain bikes require wider trails
- After creating an inventory of the trails and analyzing these trails for accessibility and inclusiveness standards, recommendations will be brought forward to stakeholders and user groups for review
- A regional working group will be created to bring together different decision makers to identify gaps and enhance trails
- Requested that a member of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (the Committee) join the project
- Improvements to trails include infrastructure such as benches, bridges and universal washrooms
- Goal of the project is to ensure that trails can accommodate all abilities, ages and to create a communication or marketing piece to show which trails can accommodate different abilities

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Richard Harlow volunteered to join the Nanaimo Inclusive Trails Project

Charlotte Davis, Manager, Recreation Services, advised the Committee that a pilot of the trails assessment program would be completed in 2022 and is linked to the City's GIS mapping system, which shows the condition of trails for capital planning. Staff will share this information with the Nanaimo Inclusive Trails Project once complete.

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Importance of having trails that can accommodate scooters, strollers and all abilities so families can enjoy the trails together
- Ensuring that washroom facilities are inclusive and recognize members of the community who identify as non-binary
- Parking spaces that accommodate wheelchairs being loaded and unloaded from the back and side of a vehicle
- Regional District of Nanaimo representation on the project as well as City of Nanaimo

Jacquelyn Novak, Director, TOA Consulting, advised the Committee that parking is included in the project as well as transportation options to drop people off and pick people up closer to trails and parks. She stated that neighbouring communities have shown an interest in the project.

(b) Facilitated Discussion regarding Commercial Street Master Plan

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, introduced the Commercial Street Master Plan and advised the Committee that Ryan Mortisan, Senior Engineer, Toole Design, and Tyler Golly, Edmonton Officer Director, Toole Design, would be providing a PowerPoint presentation.

Ryan Mortisan, Senior Engineer, Toole Design, and Tyler Golly, Edmonton Officer Director, Toole Design provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Project area includes Dallas Square Park to Tideline Park, Bastion Street, Front Street and Wharf Street
- Public engagement is currently taking place and includes Diana Krall Plaza, the proposed transit exchange and Commercial Street, with more public engagement taking place in early 2022
- There are three parts to the design process including, creating a unified vision, producing a phasing plan for capital planning and creating urban realm designs guidelines
- Schedule of engagement and data collection is from September 2021 to July of 2022 when Staff will come to Council with findings and recommendations
- Different types of recognized street designs can be considered to ensure that Commercial Street becomes more of a public space than a street, such as:
 - Curbless areas for people to move freely in a variety of ways with a variety of abilities; however, curbs are important in areas where pedestrians and vehicles are in close proximity to each other
 - Universally accessible areas provide spaces for all types of mobility but limit the amount of interaction with vehicles
 - Detectable warning surface
 - Directional indicators – spaces with no interruptions or barriers to movement
 - Detectable edge – alerts people they are entering a shared pedestrian and vehicle zone
 - Detectable change in surface texture – slows down vehicles

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Ensuring wheelchairs and scooters have enough room to maneuver
- Holding public engagement events in the north end of Nanaimo
- Ensuring road and pedestrian surfaces are safe for all users
- Ensure that there are drop off and pick up locations for taxis and busses close to the area
- Different textures on sidewalks and streets are helpful for people who are blind or visually impaired
- Definitions of universal spaces should include accountability for all bodies not just all abilities
- Should include public spaces and facilities that are gender inclusive and don't have a binary structure
- Rest and transit benches that do not have dividers and provide a seated, rest area every 30 meters
- BC Building Code Accessibility Handbook contains accessible design standards

(c) Verbal Update re: Council Recommendation regarding Options to Ban Conversion Therapy

Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk, Legislative Services provided the Committee with a verbal update on the status of the options to ban conversion therapy. Highlights included:

- A report will be going forward to Council but staff wanted to provide the Committee with a brief overview of what has transpired since the Committees recommendation to Council on February 24, 2021.
- Bill C-6, which proposed to criminalize conversion therapy was introduced by the Federal Government to the House of Commons on October 20, 2020. It received second reading on June 2, 2021 at the Senate but did not clear the Senate prior to the federal election being called so the Bill died when Parliament was prorogued.
- During the Bill's readings, staff looked into what possible options existed for the City to regulate and prohibit conversion therapy as requested by Council.
- In general, the City has limited authority to regulate conversion therapy.
- An outright ban would exceed the City's authority under the Community Charter and Local Government Act
- A prohibition through business licensing was reviewed; however, the Community Charter does not give general power to municipalities to prohibit a class of business, unless specified in the legislation, unlike the City of Vancouver which gets it authority through the Vancouver Charter.
- Banning conversion therapy through the zoning bylaw was also explored but it would be challenging to define "conversion therapy" as a land use and any existing uses would be considered lawful non-conforming.
- The Federal Government has stated that it plans to re-table a Bill during this session of Parliament that would criminalize conversion therapy

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Mayor previously denounced conversion therapy during an open meeting
- Suggested that Council members speak in support of the Bill when the report is considered

Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk, advised the Committee that the Committee could encourage Council to communicate to the local Member of Parliament their support in the passing of the Bill and that there are a number of steps involved in passing a Federal bill but Staff are sure the bill is a priority for the Federal Government.

(d) 24 Hour Parking Exemption

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, provided the Committee with a verbal update regarding the 24 hour parking exemption. Highlights included:

- Staff have been looking at best practices in other municipalities and there are various ways parking is handled for residents
- The original purpose was to ensure that vehicles were not left on streets for an extended period of time
- Transportation and the Bylaw Department are working together to bring a report to Council regarding the City's vision for parking
- Staff continue to monitor and assess on-street parking demand and usage
- Parking will be scheduled for a future Governance and Priorities Committee meeting for discussion

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, provided the Committee with an update regarding prohibiting garbage cans on sidewalks and transit stops. Highlights included:

- The "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000" and the "Municipal Solid Waste Collection Bylaw 2011 No. 7128" contain language that prohibits garbage cans from being placed on the sidewalk
- A Staff level workshop will be scheduled in the future to develop consistent treatment of transit stops

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Seniors with mobility issues having to move their cars daily and inability to afford parking spaces in a parkade
- Developments having enough parking on site for all tenants
- Complaints regarding accessibility being given priority over other complaints
- Creating an easy reporting system where complaints are received and reviewed more quickly
- Difficulty in reporting issues when a person is visually impaired or blind such as reading house number or street signs to enter a complaint
- Creating a mail out or better communication to educate residents on the accessibility issues that occur due to garbage cans on the sidewalk and taking a proactive approach

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, advised the Committee that he would speak with the Bylaw Department to see if infractions can be prioritized and more/better education regarding the implications of garbage cans on the sidewalk can be built into the annual pick up schedule.

Councillor Armstrong disconnected from the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

(e) Verbal Update re: Implementation of the New Leisure Economic Access Pass (LEAP)

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, and Laara Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services, provided the Committee with an update. Highlights included:

- The new LEAP program was implemented in August 2021 and Parks and Recreation Staff have received 118 applications and 98 of those have been approved
- Changes and improvements to the program included:
 - Easy online application form on the website
 - Reduced the amount of questions and paperwork required
 - Changed what is considered income
 - Amount of visits to facilities remained the same but participants can now get a one-time annual top up card for additional visits
- Over 200 updated LEAP cards have been issued for returning participants
- Next steps include a marketing program with service providers and organizations with a focus on children and family services
- Future considerations or changes include:
 - Implementing adjudicator programs where local agencies can approve clients for the LEAP pass
 - Including City owned cultural facilities such as the Port Theatre and museum
 - Pre-approvals for families on income assistance
 - Partnering with School District #68 to bring the LEAP pass to students
 - Potential to include a bus pass
 - LEAP pass approved for more than one year for select participants such as designated persons with disabilities or income assistance recipients

Committee discussion took place regarding the threshold amount used to determine eligibility in the LEAP program.

(f) Beban Pool Outdoor Learning Centre

Due to time constraints, Agenda Item 5(f) – Beban Pool Outdoor Learning Centre was moved to the 2022-JAN-12 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting.

6. REPORTS:

(a) 2021 Workplan Review

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture, provided the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness a verbal update. Highlights included:

- Staff advised that the annual report to Council will be completed in the early 2022
- The Guiding Principles topic listed in the 2021 Workplan has not been created and Staff are requesting that the Committee confirm if this topic should be included in the 2022 Workplan

Committee discussion took place regarding setting aside a full Committee meeting to discuss the 2022 Workplan.

(b) 2022 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Key Date Calendar

Introduced by Sky Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer, Legislative Services.

(c) REIMAGINE Nanaimo Policy Workshop

Kirsty MacDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner, requested that the Committee pick a date for the REIMAGINE Nanaimo workshop.

By unanimous consent, the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness chose December 15, 2021 – 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. as the date for the REIMAGINE Nanaimo workshop and advised staff that an electronic meeting is preferred.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness - Outstanding Recommendations

Due to time constraints, Agenda Item 7(a) - Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness - Outstanding Recommendations was moved to the 2022-JAN-12 Committee meeting.

(b) Engagement for Accessibility and the BC Building Code

A link to participate in the Province of BC online engagement for the BC Building Code was provided to Committee members for information.

(c) Universal Design Workshop Reminder

Lynn Wark, Director, Recreation Services advised the Committee that the Universal Design workshop will be held on December 1, 2021.

(d) Nanaimo Aquatic Centre Water Feature Review

Due to time constraints Agenda Item 7(d) – Nanaimo Aquatic Centre Water Feature Review was moved to the 2021-JAN-12 Committee meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 6:06 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CHAIR

DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER