

## MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING  
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,  
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC  
WEDNESDAY, 2022-APR-27, AT 4:01 P.M.

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Present: Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair  
Councillor Z. Maartman (joined electronically)  
A. Breen, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
S. Cameron, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
R. Harlow, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
D. Hollins, At Large Member (joined electronically, disconnected 4:17 p.m.)  
R. Pike, At Large Member (joined electronically)

Absent: E. Williamson, At Large Member  
S. Hamel, At Large Member  
T. Davenock, At Large Member  
J. Maffin, At Large Member

Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture  
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works  
B. Corsan, Director, Corporate and Business Development  
L. Wark, Director, Recreation Services  
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning  
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services  
C. Davis, Manager, Parks Operations  
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation  
D. Thompson, Manager, Roads and Traffic Services  
D. Beck, Parks & Open Space Planner  
M. Elliott, Project Manager  
T. Clift, Trails Supervisor, Parks  
G. Davenport, Supervisor, Roads  
J. Knight, Capital Project Management Specialist  
K. Robertson, Deputy City Clerk  
Aria Mac Coll, Recording Secretary

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

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The 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. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Special Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting held electronically on Wednesday, 2022-MAR-23 at 4:04 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

4. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Prescription for Health (VIU & Recreation)

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

Presentation:

1. Joanne A. Schroeder, M.A. Leisure Service Administration, Faculty Department, Recreation and Tourism, Vancouver Island University. Highlights included:

- Recreation intervention project was completed to show a 360 lens of the community to address systemic issues in health and wellness
- Three schools took part in the project which lasted 16 weeks with 120 participants being grade 5 students
- A pre, mid and post wellness assessment was conducted as well as a wellness survey of each child
- Goals of the program are embedded from the national Framework for Recreation in Canada
- The project focused on active transportation, connection to nature, inclusion and access, collaborative systems, digital detox, and access to food and nutrition
- Healthy role models used in the program were emerging professionals as an interdisciplinary group from Vancouver island University (VIU)
- The program was made possible by the Island Health and Wellness Grant that included VIU, Primary Care providers, City of Nanaimo and School District #68
- Children participated two hours per day during school time and all participants were provided a free active pass to use facilities in Nanaimo
- Collaborative approaches are needed to help with health and equity, and to tackle systemic change in health and wellness
- Exposing children to positive leisure experiences will create life long participation
- The following were the five themes of the program:
  - were social relationships
  - cognitive development
  - economic and material health and wellbeing
  - mental and emotional health and wellbeing
  - physical health and wellbeing

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Equipment barriers and how the City of Nanaimo (City) can help organizations disperse used equipment
- Educating the community to recognize there is help available to have all children participate in sports
- Recognizing health and wellness can include nature walks on trails and that not all children will enjoy sports
- The City would like to expand the program by reaching youth through other organizations and non-profits as well as bringing health and wellness to neighbourhoods
- Physical, cultural, and food literacy is crucial to successful education
- Body Mass Index (BMI) and its inclusion in the health measurements of children in the program and the possible negative impacts

(b) Design Commercial Update

Introduced by Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works.

Presentation:

1. James Knight, Capital Project Management Specialist, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - The Design Commercial Update extends from Tideline Park to Dallas Square Park including Skinner Street, Bastion Street and Wharf Street
  - There was a robust stakeholder engagement schedule which included site tours, meetings, open houses, surveys and presentations
  - The key goals of the project, in the discovery phase, were to collaborate with the community and stakeholders to identify project values and ideas
  - The highest ranking desired elements for Commercial Street were the following:
    - Flexible space for community events
    - Seating, dining, viewing and rest areas
    - Greenery with trees, plantings, and weather protection
    - Enhance pedestrian environment
    - Lighting for pedestrian comfort and safety
  - Flushed streets without curbs and wider sidewalks with smooth surfaces are proposed for accessibility for all wheel users
  - Textured edges were suggested to be implemented for those with low visibility to distinguish between the street and the road
  - The entire road surface will be raised which will include warning strips at each crosswalk
  - Coloured concrete strips could be used when completing the rainbow intersection that is proposed

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Connecting the rainbow theme throughout the upgrade of the downtown

- Safety and security audit for downtown Nanaimo and connecting both concepts together to be cohesive
- Textured road surfaces regarding barriers and impeding those with mobility issues with even and smooth surfaces preferred as they are the most accessible for all users
- Trees and plantings not hanging below seven feet to assist those who are visually impaired
- More accessible washrooms are needed
- Encouraging the business community to make their businesses more accessible, including retrofitting doorways

Staff spoke regarding the topic of washrooms in the downtown and outlined the costs associated with each washroom. Staff noted that portable accessible washrooms would be provided in the downtown for events in the interim until further plans can be made to incorporate more washrooms.

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness support, in principle, the project concept as outlined in the 2022-APR-27 report by James Knight, Capital Project Management Specialists, with the following suggestions for consideration:

- Smooth road surfaces (not textured);
- Accessible washrooms, especially during events;
- Ensure branches from trees are trimmed so that they do not hang below a minimum of seven feet; and
- Encourage the business community to make their businesses fully accessible.

The motion carried unanimously.

(c) Accessing Downtown Businesses Discussion

R. Pike, Member at Large who had requested this topic be added to the agenda, advised that her concerns were addressed through item 4(b) and that she had no further comments.

D. Hollins, Member at large disconnected from the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

(d) Public Engagement Summary and Phased Concept Plan for Westwood Lake Park Amenity Improvement Implementation

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

- The plan for Phase 1 is to improve the main parking access. Under Phase 2, trail access will be improvement, including the entrance to the first beach, and a new accessible washroom added.
- Textured permeable surfaces will not be used in the accessible stalls and instead they will have smooth asphalt or a brushed smooth concrete
- Design for Westwood Lake park (the Park) saves as much vegetation as possible and provides for accessibility
- Lights for the park will not be installed to ensure it is a daytime only park
- Accessible ramps will be looked at for entry into the water

- Design for the Phase 2 washroom has not been started

(e) Accessibility Issues Relating to Snow and Ice Control

Charlotte Davis, Manager, Parks Operations, and David Thompson, Manager, Roads and Traffic Services, conveyed that they were in attendance to seek feedback based on concerns previously expressed by the Committee regarding accessibility during the winter snow storms.

Committee members requested that consideration be given to the following:

- Increasing the City's snow and ice control budget to ensure areas are cleared for pedestrians generally, as well as at bus stops
- More snow clearing of sidewalks in areas where pedestrians have to access businesses and in places where the snow is piled too high on sidewalks causing pedestrians to have to go on the road
- Giving priority snow clearing to the urban centres on the first day, then neighbourhoods
- Ensuring that parking lots with accessible spaces are cleared of snow.

A discussion ensued about the unprecedented winter the City had and acknowledged that crews were struggling to keep on top of the back to back snow falls; however, the General Manager of Engineering and Public Works stated that staff would give higher consideration in the future to ensure that snow is cleared around transit stops and accessible parking lot spaces. It was also noted that educating the public earlier in the year on snow fall procedures and responsibilities of homeowners and business owners would be helpful.

(f) Work Plan Priorities 2022

Lynn Wark, Director, Parks, Recreation & Culture outlined the following four outstanding work priorities and sought feedback on which item should be given priority before the term ends:

- Guiding Principles
- Reimagine Nanaimo
- Accessible Programs and Services
- Gender and diversity

By unanimous consent the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness wished to focus on gender and diversity for the 2022-JUN-22 meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) AccessAbility Week

Introduced by Laara Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services. Highlights included:

- 2022-MAY-29 to 2022-JUN-04 is AccessAbility week and City Staff would like to acknowledge the committee members and the work they have completed

with a press release that highlights the Committee's achievements and the work completed. This will also assist in encouraging other members of the community to join in the future.

(b) Option to Return to in Person Meetings

Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk noted that due to technology limitations, meetings to date either had to be held fully electronic, or in person. With recent technology changes, the option now exists to hold hybrid meetings wherein some members could attend in person and others electronically. She asked Members for their preference moving forward but indicated that if the hybrid model was chosen that the Chair would be required to attend in person and Committee Members would also be responsible for advising the Corporate Officer each time they planned to attend electronically.

By unanimous consent the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness supported the hybrid model going forward.

6. QUESTION PERIOD:

There were no members of the public in attendance to ask questions.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 6:08 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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DEPUTY CITY CLERK