

## MINUTES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING  
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE, 411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC  
WEDNESDAY, 2023-SEP-06, AT 4:04 P.M.

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Present: Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair  
Councillor H. Eastmure  
T. Brzovic, At Large Member (vacated 5:41 p.m.)  
J. Cowan, At Large Member  
S. Enns, At Large Member  
W. Hall, At Large Member  
R. Harlow, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
T. Hirasawa, At Large Member  
B. Kinrade, At Large Member  
J. Maffin, At Large Member (joined electronically)  
A. Stuart, At Large Member (joined electronically, disconnected 5:29 p.m.)  
N. Sugiyama, At Large Member

Absent: L. Derksen, At Large Member

Staff: R. Harding, Acting CAO/General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture  
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works  
D. Osborne, Director, Recreation & Culture  
L. Brinkman, Manager, Current Planning  
M. Bryson, Manager, Recreation Facilities and Custodial Services  
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services  
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation  
L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning  
T. Webb, Manager, Communications  
K. Biegun, Planner  
A. Daly, Recreation Coordinator  
C. Horn, Planner  
S. Gurrie, City Clerk  
A. Chanakos, 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 4:04 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Add Agenda Item 8(c) Discussion on Inclusive Housing Seminar
- (b) Add Agenda Item 8(d) Draft Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Workplan Discussion and Potential Future Meeting Dates
- (c) Add Agenda Item 8(e) Feedback on Maffeo Sutton Park

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 Special Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2023-JUN-07, at 4:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT:

(a) Introductions – Councillor Armstrong

Committee members and Staff gave a brief introduction of themselves.

6. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Rick Hansen Foundation Audit Review

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

Presentation:

1. Mike Bryson, Manager, Recreation Facilities and Custodial Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- In January 2023, the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) approached the City to perform a complete audit of three City facilities: Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Frank Crane Arena and Bowen Park Complex
- The RHF offered up to \$82,000 in grant funding to modernize facilities to a new accessibility standard, and provided funding for Staff to receive training to become facility auditors
- Two City staff members took a 10-week accessibility training course with Vancouver Community College. Both staff members passed the course and are eligible to write an exam to become full fledged auditors to audit any City facilities for accessibility
- The audit rating system has two levels of certification:
  - 60-79% meets the RHF Accessibility Certification standards
  - 80% or higher meets the RHF Accessibility Certification Gold standard
- The Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (NAC) received a 77% certification rate
- Areas of success included power operated entry doors, adequate interior lighting, exterior pathways providing sufficient width and exterior seating, an accessible parking lot, and accessible pool

- Areas of improvement included installing additional markings on glazed doors, additional directional signage in reception area, installing Braille on washroom doors, raised text and symbols at accessible locations, and adding visual fire alarms for the hearing impaired

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The current NAC slide set up does not offer an accessible option, but potential designs could be looked at in the future
- Adult change tables were recommended to be added by the RHF; however, space is currently an issue in the washrooms
- Accessible pathways from bus stops to the NAC are an issue due to obstacles on the paths
- A new motorized change table has been purchased for the universal change room, and will be installed during the annual maintenance shutdown
- Outdoor accessibility improvements would involve a partnership with School District 68 and the City as the pathway from the bus stop to the Aquatic Centre crosses school property
- Future outdoor improvements should also include the stadium district
- RHF has offered free training for City staff on September 11 via Zoom to help staff gain awareness and better serve customers using facilities

Mike Bryson, Manager, Recreation Facilities and Custodial Services, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Frank Crane Arena received a 74% accessibility rating
- Areas of success included power operated exterior doors, exterior pathways providing sufficient width and exterior seating, accessible lobby and adequate interior lighting, accessible drop off and pick up lane, and accessible exterior directional signage
- Areas of improvements included accessible parking stalls, color-contrasted slip resistant strips at ramp landing transitions, interior directional signage in lobby and reception area, and installation of braille on washrooms and offices

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding adding safety call buttons in washroom stalls.

Mike Bryson, Manager, Recreation Facilities and Custodial Services, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Bowen Park Complex received a 68% accessibility rating
- Areas of success included power operated exterior doors, exterior pathways providing sufficient width and exterior seating, adequate interior lighting, accessible lobby and accessible parking stalls
- Areas of improvement included adding exterior directional signage, adding tactile indicators at the top of staircases, additional directional signage at reception, replacing knob-style door handles with lever style handles, and adding visual fire alarms for the visually impaired

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding increased improvements that could be made to Bowen Park Complex regarding parking and wheelchair accessibility around the facility.

Mike Bryson, Manager, Recreation Facilities and Custodial Services, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Of the \$82,000 grant provided by RHF, \$24,000 has been spent so far to improve wayfinding signage, add visual strobe lights to fire alarms, and increase mobility assist options in washrooms and hallways
- The six parallel parking stalls outside the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre have been made into accessible parking stalls

## 7. REPORTS:

### (a) Housing Needs Report

Introduced by Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning.

- During the month of September, the City is requesting public input on various housing types via the City website, an online survey and open house

#### Presentation:

1. Kasia Biegun, Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - The Housing Needs Report (HNR) identifies population challenges to afford housing, housing supply gaps, and other housing issues
  - The HNR also fulfills the Provincial legislation of providing a housing needs report every five years
  - Non-market housing includes safe houses, supportive housing, subsidized rentals, and ownership and co-op housing
  - Market housing includes purpose-built rentals, strata apartments, duplexes and single family homes
  - Nanaimo's current population is around 100,000, and is expected to reach 126,200 by 2031
  - To keep on track with population growth, 1,000 units need to be built each year
  - Current housing types being built include 51% single family homes, 36% apartments and 5% townhouses. The HNR identified a need to decrease single family homes and increase apartments and townhomes due to cost and demand
  - The HNR identified a need to adjust the amount of single bedroom units from 14% to 67%, two-bedroom units from 30% to 17%, and three-bedroom units from 56% to 16%
  - Between 2001-2016 incomes increased by 21%, and from 2016-2021 they increased by 26%, while housing prices increased 95% for single family homes, 104% for apartments, and 107% for townhomes

- The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) identified average rental prices as \$1,225 for one bedroom, \$1,530 for two bedrooms, and \$1,600 for three bedrooms
- In 2021, 23% of households spent more than 30% of household income on shelter, and the goal is to reach 0% by 2031 by building more housing
- In 2022 the vacancy rate was 2.2%. The goal is to reach 3-5% by 2031
- The homelessness point-in-time count for 2023 was 517 people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo
- By 2031, 32% of rental units are aimed to be non-market housing, and 54% to be market housing

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The 67% suggested increase in 1-bedroom units is largely geared towards seniors
- The HNR reflects CMHC statistics, not City goals
- There is an increasing need for non-market housing geared to the disability assistance rate

(b) Increasing Adaptable Housing in Nanaimo

Introduced by Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - In a 2017 study, nearly 25% of BC's population aged 15 years or older identified as having a disability
  - The *BC Building Code* classifies an adaptable unit as a basic unit allowing for future conversion to meet specific accessibility needs of a resident
  - Adaptable units include wider doorways, wider entryway and hallways, access to a main floor bathroom, reinforced walls for grab bars, and accessible door handles, switches and outlets
  - If planned at the outset, creating an adaptable unit in a multi-unit building has minimal impact to building costs
  - Proposed Zoning Bylaw changes include a requirement for buildings with 10 or more units to have 50% of the units meet basic adaptable unit standard in accordance with the *BC Building Code*, and for 100% of the units in a seniors development meet those standards
  - Developers can achieve a density bonus by providing greater than 50% adaptable units
  - The Province is looking to update the *BC Building Code* to require 100% of units to be adaptable in four-storey apartment buildings, and all first-floor units in multi-unit buildings of three-storeys or less

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Even with the BC Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptations, accessible upgrades are costly to individuals. It is more cost effective for units to be made adaptable during the building phase
- The City hired an economist to analyze adaptable and family-friendly units to determine costs to build adaptable units at the building phase. It was determined that additional costs would be minimal; however, Staff will consult with members of the development community to gain further insight
- Universal building design should be updated to include elements such as wider doorways and hallways to make all units accessible at the minimum level

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council support the proposed amendments to the City of Nanaimo's Zoning Bylaw to create more adaptable housing in Nanaimo as outlined in the 2023-SEP-06 report titled "Increasing Adaptable Housing in Nanaimo". The motion carried unanimously.

(c) Increasing Family-Friendly Housing in Nanaimo

Introduced by Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - Family-friendly housing is defined as units with two or more bedrooms supporting households with more than two people
  - Although Nanaimo has many single-family homes with three or more bedrooms, the cost has made them unattainable for many families
  - Proposed Zoning Bylaw changes will require developments of 10 or more units to have at least 30% of the units be two or more bedrooms and 10% be three or more bedrooms
  - If family-friendly units are ground-oriented and within 400 meters of a public school, they would qualify for a density bonus
  - Due to the high cost of providing underground parking, if underground parking is part of a building with a high number of two- and three-bedroom units, a parking variance could be considered

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Elevator access and subfloor insulation is essential for family-friendly rental housing
- Family-friendly housing should also be geared towards those who need live-in caregivers, and should be renamed accordingly
- Lack of parking creates accessibility issues, and is often created by approving parking variances

Alexandria Stuart disconnected from the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

- The current City Plan focus is in connecting various neighbourhoods by transit-accessible corridors
- Parking affordability is an issue for some apartment complexes, causing residents to park on the street in surrounding areas

It was moved and seconded that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council support the proposed amendments to the City of Nanaimo's Zoning Bylaw, and new parking variance criteria, to create more family-friendly housing in Nanaimo as outlined in the 2023-SEP-06 report titled "Increasing Family-Friendly Housing in Nanaimo".

It was moved and seconded that the motion be amended to remove the following:

"and new parking variance criteria".

The motion carried.

Opposed: *Councillor Eastmure and Tania Brzovic*

The vote was taken on the main motion, as amended, as follows:

That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council support the proposed amendments to the City of Nanaimo's Zoning Bylaw to create more family-friendly housing in Nanaimo as outlined in the 2023-SEP-06 report titled "Increasing Family-Friendly Housing in Nanaimo". The motion carried.

Opposed: *Councillor Eastmure*

(d) Infill Housing and Secondary Suite Regulations

Introduced by Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Caleb Horn, Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - Currently suites are permitted up to two bedrooms and 90 m<sup>2</sup>.
  - Proposed Zoning Bylaw changes include increasing the allowable space to 100 m<sup>2</sup> and up to three bedrooms
  - Staff are also proposing to allow two suites on one property, one attached to the main house and one detached suite, as well as permitting secondary suites in townhouses and duplexes
  - Infill housing is defined as housing going into an existing neighbourhood
  - Proposed Zoning Bylaw changes include re-zoning existing single-family lots and duplex lots within 1km of the downtown, and within "Neighbourhood" designation, to allow triplexes and fourplexes without requiring a rezoning application

Tania Brzovic vacated the Boardroom at 5:41 p.m.

- Other proposed changes include adjusting zoning criteria to allow more fourplexes, reducing minimum lot sizes and front yard setbacks, and providing a density bonus when preserving an existing home

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- When adding a suite, a separate, designated parking spot also needs to be included
- The current Zoning Bylaw does not allow the separate sale of a carriage house, but could increase the value of the lot as a whole
- Stacked townhomes would be a more wheelchair accessible form of housing than standard townhouses
- Consider, when adding two suites, requiring one suite be made adaptable

It was moved and seconded that the following recommendation be deferred to the 2023-NOV-06 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness meeting:

“That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council support the proposed Infill Housing and Secondary Suite Regulations, as outlined in the 2023-SEP-06 report titled ‘Infill Housing and Secondary Suite Regulations.’”

The motion carried unanimously.

(e) Inclusive Bus Stop Pilot Project

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

- The City of Nanaimo is responsible for road infrastructure and the Regional District of Nanaimo is responsible for transit
- The previous Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness term members put forward a motion to make transit stops more accessible

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, spoke. Highlights included:

- City Plan has a multi-faceted perspective on mobility in the city
- Staff have been working on a partnership project with many road authorities across the province to review floating bus stops and ways to amend agency design guidelines to ensure they meet the needs of all users
- Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, was invited to participate in a pilot project to review some city bus stop locations and make changes based on bus stop review recommendations
- The two bus stop locations to be reviewed are Front Street and Bowen Road

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Location of bus stop benches is part of the bus stop review; however, the number of benches is not included
- The pilot project is focussed on bus stops adjacent to cycling facilities



8. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Correspondence, dated 2023-JUL-04, re: Disabled Parking Permit Holders and Apartment Loading Zones

Introduced by Councillor Armstrong.

By unanimous consent, Agenda Item 8(b) Correspondence, dated 2023-JUN-05, re: *Accessibility Canada Act* was deferred to the 2023-NOV-06 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness meeting.

By unanimous consent, the following agenda items were deferred to the 2023-OCT-11 Special Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness meeting:

- Agenda Item 8(c) Discussion on Inclusive Housing Seminar
- Agenda Item 8(d) Draft Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Workplan Discussion and Potential Future Meeting Dates

By unanimous consent, Agenda Item 8(e) Feedback on Maffeo Sutton Park will be distributed to Committee members.

9. QUESTION PERIOD:

The Committee received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 6:05 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER