



## MINUTES

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVENESS MEETING

Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 4:00 P.M.  
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

- Present: Councillor H. Eastmure, Chair  
A. Dillingham-Lacoursiere, At Large Member  
S. Enns, At Large Member  
R. Harlow, At Large Member\*  
T. Hirasawa, At Large Member  
S. Pump, At Large Member\*  
N. Sugiyama, At Large Member
- Absent: Councillor S. Armstrong  
T. Brzovic, At Large Member  
L. Derksen, At Large Member  
B. Kinrade, At Large Member  
J. Maffin, At Large Member  
A. Stuart, At Large Member
- Staff: D. Osborne, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture  
N. Vracar, Deputy Corporate Officer  
L. Clarkson, Manager, Recreation Services  
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation  
P. Stewart, Manager, Engineering Projects  
K. Biegun, Planner, Community Development  
K. Lundgren, Zoom Moderator  
A. Chanakos, Recording Secretary

\* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

**1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:**

(a) Add Agenda Item 9(b) Outdoor Play Day at Westwood Lake Park

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

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

**4. ADOPTION OF 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, 2025-MAY-14, at 4:02 p.m., be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT:**

(a) Welcome to New Member and Roundtable Introductions

Councillor Eastmure introduced Andrea Dillingham-Lacoursiere as the newly appointed member of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness.

Committee members introduced themselves in a round table discussion.

The Chair advised that the removal of Question Period from advisory committee agendas was due to an amendment to "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272".

**6. PRESENTATIONS:**

(a) Woodgrove Area Plan

Kasia Biegun, Planner, Community Development, provided an on-screen presentation included in the agenda package. Highlights included:

- In 2022, Council adopted the City Plan, which is a 30-year growth plan for the City. One of the action items in the City Plan is to look at urban centres and provide more detailed land use planning
- The goal of the Woodgrove Area Plan is to refine the vision of the Woodgrove Urban Centre, achieve a complete community and improve access to amenities

- Approximately 170 properties are included in the Woodgrove Urban Centre study area
- The project will be completed over three phases:
  - Phase 1 has recently been completed and reviewed the current state of the area in regards to achieving a complete community, including amenities, housing and the state of the current infrastructure. A report of these findings is available on the Get Involved Nanaimo website
  - Phase 2 is currently taking place and focuses on growth scenarios. Three growth scenarios are being considered (2,500 people, 5,000 people and 7,500 people) as well as the implications of each scenario, and what is needed to achieve a complete community
  - Phase 3 will consider policies and actions and how the overall vision can be implemented into the Woodgrove Area Plan
- An engagement process will occur at each phase, and includes a survey which is available online through the Get Involved Nanaimo website, or paper copies will be provided at Oliver Woods Community Centre, Vancouver Island Regional Library Nanaimo North Branch and the Service and Resource Centre
- Staff are meeting with key partners including residents, property owners and leaseholders within the Woodgrove Urban Centre, as well as the Dover Neighbourhood Association and other levels of government
- Community engagement for Phase 2 will provide feedback on the growth scenarios. A survey is open until 2025-JUL-16 and Staff are seeking feedback from Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness members and Committee member networks. Staff have also requested feedback on any accessibility concerns regarding the survey

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Staff acknowledged that the newspaper advertisement for the survey did not identify the locations of where to find paper copies, and will consider ways to improve advertising in the future
- Concern regarding a lack of accessible crosswalks in the Woodgrove area. Staff are working with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit to help improve these intersections, and are proposing to move the Woodgrove transit exchange to a more central location

- Concern regarding a lack of street lighting along some bus routes which creates visibility challenges for bus drivers being able to see individuals at bus stops in the winter months
- The Woodgrove Urban Centre is currently dominated by retail spaces due to the current land use. The Woodgrove Area Plan will aim to integrate more mixed-use development to promote a more diverse range of services
- Staff are working with Island Health to ensure health services are integrated into the north end
- A desire for potential supportive housing in the north end
- As a result of the current lack of parks and open spaces in the Woodgrove Urban Centre, there are six park spaces proposed in Phase 2. At the redevelopment stage, Staff will work with the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department to determine what types of parks can be implemented

(b) Accessibility and Transit

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, provided an on-screen presentation included in the agenda package. Highlights included:

- The City is responsible for infrastructure that gets people to and from transit infrastructure, including traffic signals and crosswalks
- The City relies on its Manual of Engineering Standards and Specifications, which was adopted in 2019, for developing transportation infrastructure and accessibility features
- The City participated in a provincial pilot project with BC Transit, TransLink and other BC municipalities to seek ways to continue to provide fully accessible bus stops

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Concerns from the public regarding some pedestrian crossing buttons being inaccessible to some users. As a result, the City has converted a number of push buttons to motion activated signals
- In an effort to improve transit stops, Staff have updated contracts with the transit shelter and bench providers and are working on improving transit stop amenities
- A desire to see sidewalks or other pedestrian improvements in areas around transit stops

Darren Marshall, Senior Manager, Transportation Services, Regional District of Nanaimo, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- BC Transit partners with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and provides support with strategic planning, infrastructure projects, training materials and performance reviews
- Transit operator training includes procedures for boarding and securing mobility devices, kneeling busses, ramp deployment and incident reporting
- The RDN offers training for de-escalation and respectful workplaces, which supports accessible service delivery

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Community feedback notes a preference for more busses and routes
- Announcements made on the bus regarding information about courtesy seats have been valuable; however, more onus needs to be put on bus drivers to remind people to give up the courtesy seats when necessary
- The current passenger guide for BC Transit advises passengers to wave to the bus in order for it to stop; however, this is not possible for all riders
- A delay between when the bus door opens and the bus number announcement occurs often leads to drivers misinterpreting a passenger waiting for the announcement as a sign they are not waiting for that bus, causing individuals to miss their bus
- Annual training occurs for bus drivers each year, and feedback provided can be incorporated into the next training session
- Providing public education on social courtesies around using the bus, rather than asking the bus drivers to monitor courtesy seats

(c) Downtown Transit Exchange

Phil Stewart, Manager, Engineering Projects, provided an on-screen presentation included in the agenda package. Highlights included:

- The Downtown Transit Exchange is a partnership project between the City, RDN and BC Transit, and was largely guided by the Regional District of Nanaimo Transit Redevelopment Strategy
- Public consultation identified four priority amenities:
  - Lighting and visibility
  - Clearly marked pedestrian crossings
  - Ensuring there is greenery around the transit exchange
  - Bus arrival information

- Additional stops have been incorporated into the design on Victoria Crescent, as well as a passenger connection between Victoria Crescent and the transit exchange
- The pedestrian signal on Terminal Avenue will provide a connection between the north and south rapid bus stops
- BC Transit requires a “Security Achieved through Functional Environment” (SAFE) Design for the transit exchange, which is an assessment and certification that is done to ensure the space feels safe and welcoming to all users
- The project is currently in the design phase and Staff anticipate commencing construction in early 2026 with completion by the end of 2026 or early 2027

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Concerns regarding pedestrians crossing Terminal Avenue to access the transit exchange, and a preference to have a pedestrian overpass; however, funding is not available at this time to provide a pedestrian overpass
- All bus stops at the transit exchange will have overhangs to protect passengers from inclement weather
- There is a process to report accessibility concerns to the City; however, there is currently no formal process for reporting accessibility concerns to the RDN. The RDN will ensure that a link is provided on any BC Transit communications to allow for feedback going forward
- Washrooms will be integrated into the design; however, designs have not been finalized
- The RDN deploys Road Support Agents that support the bus operators and the public by being present at transit exchanges; however, there is usually only one agent on at a time with plans to gradually increase their numbers
- It is undetermined if the Downtown Transit Exchange will have closed-circuit television (CCTV) on site; however, each bus is equipped with CCTV

Seth Wright, Senior Manager, Government Relations, BC Transit, noted BC Transit has a proactive safety and security team who reviews CCTV footage on a daily basis to investigate instances of assault, and advised that the RDN manages complaints received and facilitates responses.

Committee and Staff discussion continued regarding plans for accessible access between Victoria Crescent and Terminal Avenue, and the incorporation of benches into the bus stop shelters.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS:**

(a) Update re: National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Sean Enns, At Large Member, spoke regarding National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) which occurs in September in BC and occurs nationally in October. They suggested that the City participate in “Light It Up! For NDEAM”, a national lighting event that takes place on the third Thursday of October, by lighting up the Bastion and City Hall with blue and purple lights.

Committee discussion took place regarding incorporating the Disability Pride Flag during the “Light It Up! For NDEAM” event.

(b) Outdoor Play Day at Westwood Lake Park

Tami Hirasawa, At Large Member, spoke regarding Outdoor Play Day, organized by the City of Nanaimo and the Child Development Centre, which will take place at Westwood Lake Park on 2025-JUL-29 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to celebrate the grand opening of the new Westwood Lake Park amenities. Adaptive kayaks and trail riders will be available to try out, and food trucks will be on site.

**8. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 5:25 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER