

**MINUTES OF THE
ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2016**

1. THE CHAIR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 4:00 P.M.

Working Group Members Present: Linda Bartram
Susan Gallagher
Paul Jones
Chris Dobbie
Robin Bayley (via teleconference)
Steve Bertrand

Working Group Members Regrets: Chris Marks (emailed regrets)

Councillors Regrets: Councillor Alto
Councillor Loveday

Staff: Jacqueline Weston, Assistant Director, Transportation
Chaz Whipp, Manager, Facilities
Joaquin Karakas, Senior Urban Designer (presenter)
Christine Brinton, Recording Secretary

Guests: Keith and Mary, Sign Language Interpreters

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – December 5, 2016

The Accessibility Working Group (AWG) reviewed the agenda and added the following “Discussion - Budget Consultation” under Business Arising.

Motion: It was moved by Linda Bartram, seconded by Chris Dobbie that the agenda of Monday, December 5, 2016 Accessibility Working Group meeting be approved as amended.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 7, 2016

Motion: It was moved by Linda Bartram seconded by Chris Dobbie, that the minutes from the Accessibility Working Group (AWG) meeting held November 7, 2016 be approved as circulated.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation - Wayfinding Destinations, Routes and Sign Styles –
Joaquin Karakas, Senior Urban Designer, City of Victoria

Joaquin gave a 50 minute presentation regarding the Public Realm Plan (and emailed a PDF copy to Robin Bayley).

The City of Victoria is encouraging more walking, biking, public transit, and other forms of transportation and the need for good signage to help people find their way around has become more apparent. Wayfinding is knowing where you are, where you want to go, and the best route to get there.

The Accessibility Working Group (AWG) would like the City of Victoria to consider the following:

- Be consistent and predictable for the visually impaired when installing tactile surfaces and ensure a non-slip material is used;
- Reflective striping for bottom of benches and lampposts to help visually impaired in the evenings (these can be tripping hazards);
- Some wooden bench material may be porous and can hold allergens. Recycled hard plastic benches would be better.

Joaquin advised the AWG the next step would be to comment on line (link is below), there is an online survey (until December 21). The City will refine concepts, develop a draft plan, collect and input feedback on draft plan and then prepare final plan.

Google "Visual Victoria" (<http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/community/visual-victoria.html>)

4:55 presentation was completed.

5. BUSINESS ARISING:

- a) AWG Report to Council – Jacqueline Weston updated the group that Legislative Services has advised that a staff report should be written to accompany the AWG Report to Council. Staff are working on a Staff Report and anticipate that it will be included on a Committee of the Whole Meeting agenda in January 2017.

Robin Bayley enquired as to why the AWG is not able to report directly to Council. Jacqueline indicated that this is the same process as is practiced for other committees reporting to Council. Legislative Services is working on a policy for Council approval regarding reporting of committees to Council.

- b) Follow up - Re: No-lip Curbs Being Installed & Truncated Domes Pilot Project - Jacqueline Weston brought examples of the tactile domed surface (red and yellow) and distributed a map showing six potential locations. Locations on the map being proposed are as follows: Douglas at Hillside, Blanshard at Hillside, Government and Bay, Douglas and Bay, Douglas and Pembroke, Richmond and Bay Street (near the CNIB building). Linda asked about the possibility of Hillside and Shakespeare. Jacqueline will add this as a consideration / potential location. If the list is prioritized, the AWG would like Government and Bay Street intersection to be at bottom of the list.

For the sample images, Jacqueline asked the AWG if they have a preference between having the truncated dome all the way across the corner, or separate truncated domes at each point of crossing.

Linda advised these need to be installed depending on the curb cut itself and be unique to each curb and that they need to be directional and allow the person to line up safely for the crossing.

The AWG then discussed the following:

- Steve advised that Government at Bay Street intersection is very dark and hard to navigate and this may be difficult for wheelchairs / people with walkers.
- Steve also advised the sharpness of the grade is a concern, the flow of the sidewalk is important for wheelchairs / people with walkers.
- Susan Gallagher asked why the City is continuing to install no lip curbs for example as a new one has just been installed on Southgate/Superior.
- The AWG reminded staff that a recommendation was made stating the City retrofit all existing 'no-lip' curb cuts on an immediate basis.

Jacqueline provided a handout for review showing the existing standard drawing with "no lip" curb which was develop to respond to concerns regarding wheelchair accessibility and a new standard drawing with "10 mm curb lip".

When the AWG report goes to Council, staff intend to include a motion for approval of funding for the pilot project, as well as a motion to update the City's Victoria Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw with the standard drawing with "10 mm curb lip".

Action: Jacqueline will add Hillside and Shakespeare for review in pilot.

The AWG thanked Jacqueline and staff for all the work put into this so far.

c) Update from Linda Bartram Re: Budget

Linda attended the Open House budget presentation and discussed her experience and reviewed her email "budget survey" that went to the AWG on Thursday, November 24th.

Chaz Whipp then updated the AWG on the following:

- City Hall Accessibility, City Hall Council Chambers hearing loop (\$25,000)
- VCC Upgrades and Repairs, VCC wheelchair lift
- Save on Foods Memorial elevator upgrades.
- Royal Athletic Park, but there was no mention of Accessibility upgrades. Education is needed so more patrons are aware of the accessible washrooms.
- Community centres repairs and upgrades, Cook St Village Centre accessible door refit for stretchers to fit.

d) Capital City Bus Station – Chaz and Steve met the Wilson's bus representative and they passed along a list of recommendations. Steve has prepared an operations manual to give assistance to people on how to get into the washroom, especially after hours. Signage is not up yet, but recommending braille and the words "scent free" be on signage.

5:30 pm – Paul Jones left the meeting.

- e) Accessible / Audible Signals - Linda Bartram would like to ensure that City staff are aware that “audible” signals assist people with vision loss when crossing the street, not people with hearing loss, there was an error made in the draft budget presentation.

The AWG discussed the difference between audible signals (old name) and accessible pedestrian signals (new name). The new accessible pedestrian signals provide much more information, such as a locator tone, walk signal vibration and can tell you names of streets etc. There are no accessible pedestrian signals in Victoria yet and the AWG advised staff that Richmond on the mainland currently has some.

Linda advised the AWG that she posed a question to Fraser Work, Director of Engineering during the budget consultation regarding the possibility of the City installing more audible signals in 2017, in addition to the one proposed at Pandora / Fernwood. He replied that he would have to consult with staff to see if there was a list of other identified locations. The AWG then discussed the following:

- This is an important safety issue;
- More are required in the City of Victoria;
- Only accessible Pedestrian signals be installed; and,
- Flashing lights (e.g. Douglas / Michigan) can be more dangerous than helpful because for visually impaired people, there are not enough audible cues to indicate whether there is just a lull in the traffic or if the light has changed.

Action: Jacqueline and staff will review and follow up.

Discussion on BC Transit Stops for 2017 – Linda enquired regarding bus stops in the downtown core as part of the Douglas Street bus-only lanes and staff advised the construction is from Tolmie to Hillside.

Designated Pick up Zones – At this point, it is difficult for some people to get into position to catch the bus or to know when their bus has arrived, when there is more than one bus pulling into the stop. Often the last bus in the row will pull out before the disabled individual has reached the bus. Is there a pilot for new bus shelters where we could try to address this accessibility issue?

Action: This will be added to the January agenda for further discussion.

- f) City of Victoria Recreation Services for Children with Allergies – on November 29th Robin Bayley spoke with Jeff Brehaut, Manager of Recreation Services, from this discussion the following was noted:
- Jeff was not aware that the Active Living Guide is not accessible for the visually impaired, but did agree that it should be.
 - Jeff felt that they could improve the Guide by explaining how to request accommodation of a disability.
 - There is a process for receiving and escalating requests for accommodation but it is not written, nor did it sound like it covered how requests will be assessed or what

measures would be taken. It's focus is on a form authorizing medical treatment which was requested in August and still not received

- He is not aware of whether first aid kits have Epipens or if anyone is trained in their administration.
- There is no earmarked funding for accessibility in recreation.
- Robin shared by email a number of policy and program pages on accessible recreation from Toronto

Robin Bayley, subject to re-alignment with the decision-making process, for possible inclusion in the AWG report to Council, made the following motion:

"That Council instruct Recreation Services to research, develop, codify and publicize a robust disability accommodation process for recreation facilities and programs."

This motion will be circulated via email and added to the report going to Council.

Linda has had some correspondence with staff regarding accessibility on webpages, for most part the City of Victoria website is accessible. The Oakland's schedule of activities is presented very well.

- g) Grant Opportunity, Rick Hansen (Access4all.com) – Jacqueline provided a list of potential projects for this grant opportunity and asked the AWG which of the projects they would consider the top priority applicant for the grant. The intent is to prepare an application for the one top priority project. Grant applications are due March 31, 2017. Further information regarding the grant may be found at: <https://www.rickhansen.com/access4all/Barrier-Buster-Projects>

Action: Jacqueline will email the list and AWG members are to reply to all with comments.

Action: This will be added to the January agenda for further discussion.

- h) Parks Master Plan Update from November 19th – Steve Bertrand attended the open house in November and advised the AWG he raised being aware and considering the needs of people with allergies who wish to visit the City parks.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday, January 9, 2017.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.