



MINUTES - ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 8, 2024, 4:20 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 1 CENTENNIAL SQUARE

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and Xwsepsum Nation.

Meeting conducted electronically via Zoom and in-person

PRESENT

ELECTRONICALLY: S. Jennings (Chair), C. Paisley, S. Hough (Vice Chair), P. Singh

ABSENT: N. Moss, C. Marks, L. Bartram

STAFF: A. Galiev - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead, S. Mackenzie – Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Y. Funahashi – IMPACT Associate, T. Knowles – Senior Planner, Social Policy, A. Heimbürger – Legislative Coordinator

GUESTS: M. Moore – Lived Experience Consultant, K. Pasqua – Meaningful Access

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

B. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair acknowledged that the City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees First Nation and Xwsepsum First Nation communities, and thanked them for allowing us to live, work and play on their lands.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved By S. Hough

Seconded By P. Singh

That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. READING OF MINUTES

D.1 Minutes from the meeting held September 10, 2024

Moved By S. Hough

Seconded By P. Singh

That the minutes from the meeting held September 10, 2024 be approved with revisions to agenda items *Introduction to meeting, D.1 - Minutes from the meeting held July 9, 2024, F.1 - Emergency Preparedness (Emergency Management), F.3 - Accessibility related projects update, F.4 - Community Roundtable, and Next Meeting Agenda & Date – October 8, 2024* as reflected in *Attachment B - Proposed Corrections to September 10, 2024 AAC Minutes (Revised)* of the agenda package.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. Welcome Remarks from the Chair

The Chair acknowledged her appreciation to Committee member L. Bartram for filling in as Chair during the meeting held September 10, 2024.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.1 Accessible Travel (Suzan Jennings)

Committee member S. Jennings provided an overview of challenges in accessing accessible transportation while travelling within Canada. Topics included:

1. Lack of accessible coaches for transportation between Victoria and Vancouver
2. Outdated wheelchair loading mechanism and lack of accessibility during train travel
3. Long wait times for accessible taxis

Committee *discussed the following:*

1. *Supply and demand of accessible taxis*
 1. *Expense associated with supplying and maintaining accessible taxis*
 2. *Accessible taxis prioritizing long trips to airport, ferries, etc. versus in-town trips*
 3. *Legislated requirement that taxi companies provide accessible options*
2. *Transportation Board of Canada's Accessibility complaint mechanism*

F.2 Accessibility Undertakings (Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

F.2.1 Blindsquare, GoodMaps, AccessNow updates

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator provided an overview of the Blindsquare, Goodmaps and AccessNow projects being coordinated through the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Successful navigation from Pandora Avenue sidewalk to the Esquimalt Room in City Hall using the GoodMaps app.*
2. *Importance of ensuring multi-modal options for these new technological accessibility solutions (e.g. not everyone has a cell phone or can afford a data plan or providing 3D mounted maps)*

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator noted that four new van accessible parking spaces have been added by the City's Transportation Department to Beacon Hill Park.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Which advocacy and community organizations should be notified:*
 1. *Action Committee of People With Disabilities*
 2. *Disability Resource Centre*
 3. *Pacific Coast Training Centre*
 4. *Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)*
 5. *Spinal Cord Injury BC*
 6. *James Low Vision Group*
 7. *Silver Threads*

F.2.2. Accessibility features in public washrooms assessment and mapping

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead provided an overview of a request from the City's Public Works and Facilities Departments for information on accessibility features of City-owned washroom facilities.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Strategy for compiling information about 20+ washrooms currently owned and maintained by the City*
 1. *AAC Chairs and a lived experience consultant to visit all washrooms and apply Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification rating system*
 2. *Information to be made public and added to website's GIS mapping platform*

2. *Long-term goal to implement standardized accessibility requirements and retrofitting of City washroom facilities*
3. *Status of accessible modular washrooms project*
 1. *Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office to report back on whether City intends to purchase and install*
4. *Status of sidewalk assessment project*
 1. *Initiated before the Covid-19 Pandemic and then suspended*
 2. *To be discussed with Transportation during their next presentation to the committee*

F.2.3 Sensory Inclusion Certification

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator provided an overview of the City's sensory inclusion project and partnership with Kulture City.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *City's eligibility to order sensory inclusion equipment for distribution at Crystal Pool and City Hall*
2. *Inclusion and participation of Accessibility Advisory Committee members, if interested*
3. *Introduction of a mobile sensory station at Crystal Pool*
4. *Definition and City's application of a social story as a learning tool that describes a new experience or situation*
5. *Benefits of sensory bins and social stories and their application in schools*

Committee requested that agenda item F.4 - Accessible and Adaptable Housing initiative engagement (Meaningful Access) be moved as the next item of business and that the remainder of the agenda be reordered accordingly.

F.4 Accessible and Adaptable Housing initiative engagement (Meaningful Access)

Committee received a presentation from K. Pasqua, Meaningful Access Consulting regarding impacts of the BC Building Code's 2024 update on requirements for accessible and adaptable housing.

Topics discussed included:

1. Comparison of best practices against current City of Victoria practices and BC Building Code 2024 Update requirements
2. Project outcome: City to receive a summary of best practices to assist in creating tangible guidelines for building practices
3. Timeline for rollout of BC Building Code 2024 Update

4. Strengthened accessibility requirements (e.g. entrances, exits, tactile signage, etc.)

Committee discussed the following:

1. *What qualifies as a “new build” under the BC Building Code 2024 update*
 1. *Mitigating potential loopholes for developers*
2. *Desire for regulations requiring modular accessibility units specified to have a full shower and bathtub*
3. *Accessible parking stall availability and location*
4. *Desire for standardization to ensure sufficient accessibility and well thought out unit layouts*
5. *Consideration for motorized vehicles when designing accessible units:*
 1. *Motorized vehicle storage*
 2. *Access to balcony space*
6. *Consideration of emergency routes and evacuation plans for those with limited mobility*
7. *Need for accessible laundry accommodations*

F.2.4 Accessibility in Digital and Print Material

This item was not discussed.

F.2.5 Social Policy, Equity, and Accessibility Pilot Grant Program

The Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lead provided an update on the City’s new Social Policy, Equity and Accessibility grant program to provide funding to community organizations for pilot programs related to accessibility, equity and social planning.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Creation of an advisory committee to review grant applications and administer grant awards*
2. *Total of \$250,000 in available funding; \$25,000 maximum available to individual applicants*

F.3 Chair and Vice Chair Updates (Suzan Jennings and Sandra Hough)

This item was not discussed.

F.5 Community Roundtable

The Chair expressed her concerns around virtual meeting attendance and requested that committee members make an effort to keep their video on to foster a sense of participation.

Committee discussed the following:

1. *Challenges experienced by some members and inability to keep their video on*
2. *Duty to accommodate accessibility needs of committee members*
3. *Meeting length considerations such as 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.*

G. Next Meeting Agenda & Date – November 12, 2024

C. Paisley left the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Committee lost quorum and the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

H. Adjournment

This item was not discussed due to lack of quorum.