



**Accessibility Advisory Committee**

**MINUTES**

**Wednesday, July 26, 2023**

**Open to public attendance in Committee Room G**

**Lower Level, City Hall**

**Committee members may attend electronically**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	Chair
Anne Bélanger	Committee Member
Karen Basran	Human Resources Business Partner

Shannon Dolton*	Committee Member
Hazel Fitzpatrick*	Committee Member
Nancy Kato	Committee Member
Vic Leach	Committee Member
Karla Olson	Committee Member
Julia Schoennagel	Committee Member

**GUESTS:**

Asifa Lalji	Community Member/Lived Experience
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**REGRETS:**

Taryn Bruckshaw	Committee Member
Iris Cheng	Committee Member

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Mike Anderson	Manager of Transportation
Hailey Finnigan	Communications Coordinator
Erica Mark*	Recreation Services and Facilities Manager
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

\*Denotes electronic attendance

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor McEvoy opened the meeting at 5:43 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting began with a round of introductions.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** Parking Access on Sixth Street at Eighth Avenue be added to the agenda.

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**4.1 June 28, 2023**

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** the Minutes of the June 28, 2023 Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as circulated.

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

**5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**6.1 Accessibility Focus Areas Summaries**

Karen Basran, Human Resources Business Partner, Mike Anderson, Manager of Transportation; Hailey Finnigan, Communications Coordinator; and Erica Mark, Recreation Services and Facilities Manager, Seniors and Youth reviewed the Accessibility Focus Areas Summaries and noted the following:

- Staff hope to redesign the external website and will want to make it compliant with accessibility standards using recommended practices for site design; and
- Century House has a concierge-like service to support anyone with questions or access needs, a large-print newsletter, and lots of seating both in and outdoors.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Basran and Mr. Anderson provided the following comments:

- Enforcement of accessible parking is a Bylaws matter;
- Pedestrian Scramble crosswalks have complications, particularly for blind and visually impaired people;
- The transportation department refers to the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines;
- Accessibility improvements tend to be implemented as part of larger capital projects, rather than city-wide all at once;
- If a candidate for employment is not offered a position, staff let them know further feedback can be provided if desired;
- Staff would like to better assess how user-friendly Taleo is for job applicants; and
- There was a previous report done on accessible parking stalls, but it focused on the consistency and quality of the stall rather than assessing need, number of stalls, etc.

Discussion ensued, and Committee members provided the following comments:

- Sustainability plans that translate into fewer parking spaces affect the ratio of parking spaces to accessible spaces—it is no longer the right ratio;
- Accessible parking hubs would be convenient for people with mobility issues to get closer to walkable and wheelable areas;
- Would like to see a proactive project addressing accessibility in the city, not just including it as part of other projects;
- There should be a notice in the paper that notifies people of big changes to an area so they are prepared when they travel through or visit there;
- A sign that says “Sidewalk Closed” does not help a blind person, and there are many people who have severe visual impairments;

- The City website should be a priority as it is difficult to navigate;
- The City’s FEST committee should discuss accessibility of events as part of their work, and perhaps reach out to organizations like New West Pride who are doing it well;
- An important intersection that is often missing in addressing accessibility is with poverty, and it should be added to the list of groups to be included in things like the DEIAR framework;
- When making lists of groups we want to include or acknowledge, people with disabilities are often at the end of the list—suggest changing this so the list is alphabetical with Indigenous peoples first; and
- There is a need to review the benefits people get and who has access to them.

## **6.2 Update: Accessibility at the New Westminster Police Department**

Hailey Finnigan, Communications Coordinator, reviewed the Accessibility Focus Areas Summaries.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Finnigan advised that the Peer Assisted Care Team (PACT) has a close working relationship with the NWPD’s Mental Health Unit, and the partnership has freed up time for officers to respond to other calls for service.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Universal Design**

Councillor McEvoy noted that there is some work needed to understand Universal Design and take it forward. Going forward the Committee will need to establish some guidelines.

### **7.2 Additional August Committee Meeting**

Discussion ensued regarding the possible need to an additional committee meeting in early August. Staff will reach out before scheduling an additional meeting.

**7.3 Parking Access on Sixth Street at Eighth Avenue**

Councillor McEvoy will discuss this item with interested members of the committee outside of the meeting.

**8. END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 8:06 PM.

**9. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

August 23

September 27

October 25

November 22

Certified correct,

Original Signed

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Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

Original Signed

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Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk