

AGENDA
Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee
To be held in Committee Rm. 2 and via MS Teams,
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue,
Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the WSÁNEĆ peoples represented by the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum and Malahat Nations.

We are committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community. We are guided by the principle that embracing diversity enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.

- 1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES (Attachment)**
 - September 6, 2023

- 2. CHAIR'S REMARKS**
 - UBCM
 - Workshop floating bus stops
 - 2024 Advisory Committees

- 3. ACCESSIBILITY PLANS FOR THE MUNICIPAL HALL**
 - Ryan Hix, Manager of Project Delivery, Engineering

- 4. PEOPLE, PETS, AND PARKS – PLANNING AND DESIGN**
 - Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks Recreation & Community Services

- 5. ACCESSIBILITY ENGAGEMENT SESSION UPDATES**
 - Dale Samsonoff, HR Manager, People and Programs

* Adjournment *

Next Meeting: November 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

To ensure quorum, please contact Angela Hawkshaw at 250-475-5494 ext. 3505 or
angela.hawkshaw@saanich.ca if you are unable to attend.

MINUTES
ACCESSIBILITY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Committee Rm. 2 and via Microsoft Teams
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Road
September 6, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mena Westhaver, Maya Bosdet (via Teams), Rae Franklin (via Teams), Stephan Herman, Laurie-Anne Keith, Donald Kennedy, Rachid Ouache (via Teams), Shapna Mazumber and Reed Poynter.

Staff: Sheila Allen, Director, Corporate Services; Troy McKay, Senior Manager of Transportation & Development Services (via Teams); Dale Samsonoff, Manager of People and Programs; Allison Newcomb, Human Resource Associate Advisor; Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Kam Judge

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair welcomed the committee members, and the following was noted:

- The Terms Of Reference were amended and adopted by Council on August 10, 2023.
- The next meeting date may change to November 8, 2023.
- A new committee member will be appointed in the fall to replace the member that has left.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by L. Keith and Seconded by S. Herman: "That the Minutes of the Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting dated May 31, 2023 be adopted."

The committee made the following comments during discussion about the minutes:

- An endorsement from the Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) Committee for the draft plan or staff's approach to developing the plan, was not expressed clearly via a motion.
- Committee consensus was that of support for the draft plan.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

OVERVIEW OF THE DRAFT ACCESSIBILITY PLAN PRESENTATION

Melissa Lyon, Accessibility & Inclusion Matter Consulting, gave a presentation (PowerPoint on file) and the following was noted:

- Copies of the draft plan are available to the public, and questions and comments are welcome.
- The goal for this session is to:
 - Provide information about the Draft Accessibility Plan
 - To introduce the Accessibility Feedback Mechanism
 - To answer questions and receive feedback from the ADEI members.
- This process began when the *Accessible British Columbia Act* (2021) was introduced, and Saanich has met the following deadlines:
 - To have a draft plan posted publicly by September 1, 2023
 - To assemble an accessibility committee
 - To create a feedback mechanism
- Employee input has been collected. A request for public input will begin in the fall.
- This multi-year plan will be in place until 2026. Reviews and feedback will be ongoing.
- Statistics Canada has found that Canadian residents living with disabilities face many barriers.
- The employment rate for persons with disabilities has recently risen from 59% to 65% for women and to 69% for men.
- In Saanich it is estimated that 22% of students over the age of 15 are living with one or more disabilities.
- The purpose of this plan is to increase awareness, improve accessibility within Saanich and provide ways to give feedback.
- Three themes that have emerged from the consultation are:
 - Recommendations for change should be made by people that are directly affected.
 - Creation of accessible spaces should be proactive and thoughtful, not reactionary.
 - Access to facilities, programs and services should be accessible for all.
- Saanich has many accessibility achievements including:
 - A new website design with colour, print size and language options
 - Inclusion training for recreation staff
 - Improvements to washrooms, elevators, and pathways.
- Saanich employees feel that they are cared about and as a District and adapt to support them.
- Of the many barriers that the Saanich staff has identified, attitudinal barriers is a prominent theme throughout.
- The priorities identified are, awareness and training, built environment improvements, increased access to policies, procedures, and feedback. There are many actions to support achieving these priorities.
- Saanich has created a feedback mechanism to give the public the opportunity to offer input by phone, email or in person.
- Some of the next steps are to:
 - Apply for grants
 - Continue to consult with employees and the public through the feedback mechanism
 - Update the Saanich website to include an Accessibility Hub

The committee made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- Using the word “community” rather than “culture” is a more accurate description of Saanich.
- Including the words “everyone who is a resident of Saanich can continue to grow and thrive” is a more personal approach.
- Developing individual emergency plans for community members could be included in the training for emergency preparedness. Funding for this can be supplied through the budget process and grants.
- Training is needed for emergency responders to assist individuals with equipment like oxygen tanks.
- Sidewalk accessibility in Saanich is part of the built environment improvements priority.
- Multiple languages and braille would be helpful on all signage in Saanich. The sight loss community can assist in the appropriate placement of braille.
- Audio presentations or QR codes on signage would be a helpful option.
- A welcome kiosk in the Municipal Hall parking lot would promote accessibility.
- A presentation from staff to explain the plans for increasing accessibility within the Municipal Hall would be an appropriate future agenda item.
- People with disabilities and accessibility challenges could be involved in the process of choosing new software programs and overseeing environmental improvements.
- A catalogue of assistive devices and accommodations for employees is a suggestion given by staff input. Clarity would be appreciated on if the items already exist or are budgeted to acquire.
- The voluntary design guidelines for adaptable housing should be a legislated requirement.
- Standardized guidelines for our emergency response teams needs clarification.
- In general, the hiring process for equality can be a challenge.
- The word “should” could be changed to “can” under the “Nothing about us without us” theme.

FLOATING BUS STOPS

Reed Poynter, committee member, gave a presentation and following was noted:

- 18% to 20% of people in BC have some form of a disability.
- Cycling is a choice, having a disability is not.
- Transit is the only means of transportation for a large demographic of people.
- Designers need to recognize the priorities of these people and design accordingly.
- Bike lanes are a safety concern for people in the sight loss community.
- Internationally, the floating bus stop design has been introduced adjacent to bike lanes in order to assist cyclists.
- Floating bus stops are situated between the curb lane and the roadway. Many of these configurations are dangerously situated especially for the sight loss community.
- The sight loss community is not the only group of people that are affected by the future design of the floating bus stops.
- Where there is no stoplight, the reliance is on the cyclist to stop.
- Crossing the bike lane to board the bus is a concern for people with vision challenges due to potentially dangerous encounters with cyclists.

- There are five elements of design for the floating bus stops that should be considered with accessibility in mind:
 - Sidewalk
 - The edge of the sidewalk before the bike lane
 - Bike lane
 - The edge of the bus island
 - Bus island
- A universal design would assist in making these lanes safe and accessible for all. Tactile markings on the edge of the sidewalks and the bus island are options.
- Multiple experiments within Victoria have shown that the current signage to slow down and yield is being ignored by cyclists.
- The Rick Hansen Foundation recorded 21 cyclists ignoring the signage before one stopped to allow a person to cross.
- BC transit and TransLink are looking to create guidelines for the province.
- Recommendations to Saanich about the potential problems with the floating bus lanes would be appreciated.
- The use of electronic bikes is on the rise.

The committee made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- A physical barrier design is not available between sidewalks and bike lanes.
- There are challenges within the *B.C. Motor Vehicle Act* concerning controlled traffic signals and how they are used.
- A polarized yellow light could be an option for the crosswalks.

The Senior Manager of Transportation & Development Services made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- The presentation was an effective way to highlight the challenges with the floating bus stop design.
- Feedback is being collected across the province through TransLink, the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and B.C. Transit to assist in the new design.
- Saanich has volunteered to be a test community for the new guidelines that are being developed.
- In October the public and the committee are invited to visit the testing sight for evaluation.
- The test sites have been installed with duct work that is retrofitted to anticipate future regulations.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Councillor Westhaver, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk