

AGENDA
Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
Committee Rm. 2 and via Microsoft Teams
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Road
Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the lək'wəŋən 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)
 - March 13, 2024

- 2. CHAIR'S REMARKS**
 - Floating bus stop feedback
 - Round table discussion follow up (Memo attached)

- 3. COLD WEATHER PROTOCOL FOR UNHOUSED RESIDENTS**
 - See attached document

- 4. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE FOR Q1** (Memo attached)
 - Dale Samsonoff, Senior Manager, Human Resources, People and Programs
 - Mais Hajaj, Human Resources, Consultant for Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Adjournment

Next meeting: June 5, 2024

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 AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams

770 Vernon Avenue

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 5:01 p.m.

Present: Councillor Mena Westhaver (Chair), Heidi Bada, Manjit Bains, Rae Franklin (via Teams, 5:06 p.m.), Stephan Herman (via Teams), Tony Kiyak (via Teams), Laurie-Anne Keith (via Teams), Susan Mader, Swapna Mazumder, Reed Poynter, Caroline Quan (via Teams)

Staff: Sheila Allen, Director, Corporate Services (via Teams, 5:08 p.m.); Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner; Engineering; Dale Samsonoff, Human Resources Manager; Planning and Programs; Sharon Froud, Deputy Manager, Legislative Services; Sarah Faria, Community Programmer II – Events, Volunteers and Film, Parks, Recreation and Community Services; Mais Hajaj, Consultant for Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Human Resources; Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

MOVED by R. Poynter and Seconded by S. Mader: “That the Minutes of the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting held February 3, 2024 be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

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

- Assistance is offered to individuals requiring help with transporting garbage bins to the curb within Saanich.
- Celebrating successes is encouraging and motivating.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

The Deputy Manager of Legislative Services provided information on committee procedures. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The selection process is confidential and conducted by Council only. Emphasis is on recruiting individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Saanich's plans and programs are the primary focus of the Advisory Committees.
- Proposed topics must align with the Terms of Reference.
- Decisions regarding budget, legislation, and staff reports, are carefully considered by Council. Financial planning and decision-making frameworks are open for discussion and feedback.
- Residents of Saanich who have suggestions or feedback are directed to Council rather than the Advisory Committees.

COMMITTEE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- Programs in recreation centres offered to people with various sensory challenges could be considered for a future presentation.
- Improving accessibility of online forms and facilities, such as recreation centers, is important.
- Learning from the practices of other municipalities could be beneficial.
- Feedback received through the website and online surveys would be appreciated.
- Future presentations could involve exploring community groups and organizations.

The Deputy Manager exited the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

WINTER FESTIVAL PROPOSAL

The Community Programmer II – Events, Volunteers and Film provided an overview of the Winter Festival Proposal (report on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- An emphasis placed on holidays that celebrate various faiths and cultures rather than presenting a generalized celebration is preferred.
- Ensuring venue accessibility, with inquiries made regarding elevators/escalators is appreciated.
- Establishing partnerships with external businesses that could offer activities and education is preferred over sidewalk sales.
- The deliberate incorporation of diverse faiths is intentional. Uptown Shopping Centre is aligned with this approach. Efforts are committed to ensuring that this is executed with respect and appropriateness.
- Partnering with the Uptown Shopping Centre during the Multicultural Festival has fostered an authentic relationship.
- Each community group could represent a distinct cultural group and could offer engaging activities to encourage visitors to move through each station.
- Accessible tents, heating stations, and suitable seating arrangements could be explored to assist all ages.
- The event is anticipated to take place on a weekend day, lasting for 3 to 4 hours, and held annually.
- The budget will be presented to Council.
- A future presentation to review the formal plan would be appreciated.
- Building upon experiences and learning from both successes and challenges is the approach.
- BC Transit could provide complimentary services for individuals to utilize the public transit system.

The Senior Manager of Community Services and the Community Programmer II exited the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

DRAFT ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN

The Senior Transportation Planner gave a presentation (PowerPoint on file) on the Draft Road Safety Action Plan. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Comprehensive collision data could enhance understanding issues at hand. Exploring this data from an equity perspective could be beneficial information.

- The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) outlines a 30-year strategy for integrating sidewalks, bike lanes, and a bike network.
- This plan will be put into action upon its adoption by Council in the summer.
- Exploring data regarding the reduction in accidents in comparison to previous records could be beneficial.
- Allocation of budget and prioritization are crucial considerations. No funding has been allocated at this time.
- Each plan that is implemented in Saanich will work in tandem.
- Thanks was given for the recently updated speed signs.
- Saanich is the first municipality on Vancouver Island to implement a Road Safety Action Plan.
- Main feedback from consultations indicates positivity towards a focus on safety.
- The ATP could be enhanced with a focus on understanding why people aren't utilizing the trails and bike lanes and then prioritizing safety measures accordingly.
- Accessibility to all accident data in Saanich from the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC) is currently not available. Negotiations for future access could be pursued.
- Embracing simple solutions like providing amenities at bus stops could play a pivotal role in encouraging public use.
- The potential noise camera pilot project could prove crucial for individuals with sensitivities to noise.
- Collaboration with schools around safety initiatives like "Safe Routes to School", demonstrates an effort to prioritize safety in educational settings.
- Although installing speed bumps at every school could be beneficial, this is a costly process.

ACKNOWLEDGING EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

The Consultant for Accessibility, Equity and Inclusion gave an update on the events that were celebrated in February and the following was noted:

- International Women's Day was celebrated with inspiring stories and facts shared on the staff website.
- World Down Syndrome Day was marked with a march in Victoria and yellow and blue decorations in the hall.
- Ramadan was given recognition at the hall.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from R. Poynter the meeting adjourned at 6.55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Mena Westhaver, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

Agenda Item: Cold Weather Protocols for Unhouses Residents

Referred from Council meeting of January 22, 2024 to the Arts, Culture and Community Well-Being Advisory Committee and the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

RE: Notice of Motion:

“That Council direct staff to review options for unhoused residents’ personal effects storage when individuals opt to go into a warming shelter; and request the Saanich Police Department to report back on decamping procedures of unhoused population and their belongings”.

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

“It is important that Advisory Committees have the opportunity to provide input and recommendations to Council.”

“Emergency Preparedness could be asked to provide information on current protocols.”

45 -55 minutes total including presentations and questions.

Four verbal presentations of up to 10 minutes each

Suzanne Samborski

Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services

- Introduction and overview of homelessness and sheltering in parks

Captain Erin Stockill

Emergency Program Officer

- Information on current protocols
 - SEP’s actions in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies must follow provincial legislation as detailed in the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA).
 - Warming centre criteria, activation criteria, reliance on ESS volunteers, and staff capacity.
 - SEP involvement in EWP/relationship with VNFC
 - Public education initiatives

Saanich Police Department member of the Community Engagement Division

- Decamping procedures of unhoused population and their belongings
 - Police response
 - Resources offered
 - Interdepartmental collaboration

Jason Youngren

Parks Operations Manager

- An updated operational guideline entitled *Clean Up of Encampments* has been drafted.
 - The critical issue that Parks workers face when handling the personal belongings of unhoused people is safety due to unknown contents of personal belongings which may be hazardous.
 - Options for unhoused residents' personal effects storage when individuals opt to go into a warming shelter.

10 - 15 minutes Questions and Answers

*In addition to the presenters, **Rebecca Chow, Manager Occupational Health and Safety,** and **Andie Britton-Foster, Municipal Solicitor** will be present to support questions.*

Memo

To: Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
From: Sheila Allen, Director Corporate Services
Date: 4/22/2024
Subject: Q1 Reporting - Accessibility Plan and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework

This memo is to provide a progress report on commitments and activities related the District's Accessibility Plan and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework.

The District of Saanich strives to create an inclusive and welcoming culture, where people of all ages and abilities feel included and can equally access the facilities, services, and programs. In our daily work, we endeavour to apply an accessibility lens to all aspects of what we do.

Saanich is committed to identifying and removing barriers that persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups face. Our goal is to meet or exceed the Accessible B.C. Act requirements, so that Saanich can continue to grow and thrive.

On the attached table, you will find information relating to our Accessibility Plan and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy and Action Framework for the period January 1st to March 31st of 2024.

Attachment 1: First Quarter 2024

Prepared by



Dale Samsonoff
Manager, HR Planning and Programs

Approved by



Sheila Allen
Director, Corporate Services

Appendix 1 – First Quarter Update 2024

Reference	Actions	Method	Outcomes	Next steps
Training				
<p><i>Accessibility Plan 1.2.1</i></p> <p><i>“Develop and deliver learning to improve accessibility awareness and mitigate unconscious bias.”</i></p>	<p>Between January 1st and March 31st, the District designed and delivered 11 accessibility awareness training sessions for employees.</p> <p>A separate accessibility awareness session was held for the Mayor and Council.</p> <p>Cultural Sensitivity training was delivered to staff in 2 Departments.</p>	<p>Face-to-face and online.</p>	<p>594 employees were trained in Accessibility</p> <p>250 employees attended Cultural Sensitivity Training</p>	<p>Additional sessions will be offered over the Spring and Summer for those who could not attend the initial sessions.</p>

Reference	Actions	Method	Outcomes	Next steps
Cultural Awareness				
<p><i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework, Community Focus, 1.4</i></p> <p><i>“Build awareness within communities on racism and discrimination and the impacts on people and their families.”</i></p>	<p>January Lohri Harvest Festival (Beckwith Park)</p> <p>February Lunar New Year Celebration</p> <p>Family Arts Festival highlighting cultural performances (Cedar Hill Arts Centre)</p> <p>Partnered with ICA and HERE! to bring Welcome Day & Newcomer Expo (SCP)</p> <p>Celebrated Black History Month (Hall/SPD)</p> <p>March Acknowledged Nowruz (Persian New Year).</p> <p>April Celebrated Sikh Heritage Month (SPD)</p>	<p>Face-to-face and virtually.</p>	<p>Many staff attended the events. Positive feedback has been received from staff and the community.</p>	<p>More events are planned for the near future (e.g., Jewish Heritage Month in May).</p>

Reference	Actions	Method	Outcomes	Next steps
Outreach				
<p><i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework 1.1</i></p> <p><i>“Share information about the District with community organizations, First Nations, and Indigenous organizations.”</i></p>	<p>The District’s team met with the following groups:</p> <p>Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) – an organization that supports new immigrants and refugees.</p> <p>Inclusion BC – an organization that supports individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Canadian National Institute of the Blind (CNIB) – an organization that support individuals with vision loss.</p>	<p>Face-to-face at local organization offices.</p>	<p>To foster relationships and promote the District’s commitment to inclusion.</p> <p>The purpose of these meetings is to discuss a collaborative approach to inclusion and to explore barriers to employment.</p>	<p>Additional meetings are planned with other community agencies and associations.</p>

Reference	Actions	Method	Outcomes	Next steps
Data Collection				
<p><i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework, Internal Focus Priority 1.3</i></p> <p><i>“Establish a policy and system for applicants and staff to self-identify as BIPOC, Indigenous, LGBTQ2+, persons with disabilities, within privacy.”</i></p>	<p>To enhance the District’s understanding of its applicant pool and workforce, a policy and system for tracking demographic information was developed.</p> <p>A privacy impact assessment was conducted to support the collection of data.</p> <p>March - applicant survey launched.</p> <p>May/June - employee survey is scheduled.</p>	<p>Online surveys.</p>	<p>Collecting and analysing demographic data will enable the District to identify barriers, highlight unconscious bias, and build more inclusive and supportive human resources practices.</p>	<p>Data will provide valuable insight and inform evidence-based process development and programming.</p>

Reference	Actions	Method	Outcomes	Next steps
Process Improvement				
<p><i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan and Action Framework, Internal Focus Priority 1.4</i></p> <p><i>“Review screening and interview policies and practices to remove language and cultural, racial, or other barriers to recruitment.”</i></p>	<p>An inclusive language review of the District’s recruitment and selection policy, guidelines, templates and supporting materials is currently underway.</p> <p>A review of recruitment and selection industry best practices is ongoing.</p>	<p>Survey of comparable organizations; online review, academic review.</p>	<p>These policy/process and practice reviews will support District approaches and inform training for hiring managers.</p>	<p>Data will provide valuable insight and inform evidence-based process development and programming.</p>



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Memo

To: Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
From: Sheila Allen, Director Corporate Services
Date: 4/5/2024
Subject: District Planning, Feedback and Community Presentations

This memo addresses the Committee's questions by providing further information about the District's key planning documents, feedback mechanisms and community presentations.

The Planning Environment

Each year, the District of Saanich produces annual and corporate reports that provide an overview of key accomplishments and significant projects, as well as detailed financial statements.

Key documents of interest include:

The Council Strategic Plan is Saanich's roadmap that tells us where we are going and what kind of community we hope to be. The strategic priorities outlined in this plan guide our work over the coming term and pave the way for the future of Saanich and its diverse voices.

The Annual Report is written in accordance with Section 99 of the Community Charter. Saanich reports on progress toward our vision, including a synopsis of the strategic, financial, and operational progress each year.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) provides the vision for our community. In concert with other plans and policies, the OCP provides a flexible framework to advance initiatives toward ensuring that Saanich is a livable sustainable community.

The Corporate Strategic Plan, in tandem with Council's Strategic Plan, sets out the highest priorities for the organization to be achieved within the 4-year period, tied to the council term. The Plan is written with the understanding that a vast majority of work Saanich employees undertake is the provision of core services to support the foundational needs of residents. As this essential work assumes a vast majority of staff time and budget, the Corporate Plan is prepared based on what additional work the organization can reasonably complete based on valuable resources, in alignment to the Strategic Plan.

The Accessibility Plan outlines and informs the District's ongoing efforts to improve accessibility awareness and the accessibility of our facilities, programs, services, communications and employment opportunities. The plan is required under the *Accessible B.C. Act* (June 2021).

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Framework mark the Council's and District's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and aligns with the Council Strategic Plan. The Report and Framework facilitate an inclusive workplace where unique experiences are valued, and communities and residents are provided with inclusive and accessible programs, events, and services.

The Climate Plan details the actions and steps that the District is taking to protect our community, improve our quality of life, and reduce local and global risks associated with a changing climate.

The Economic Development Strategy provides a vision for the local economy, specific implementable actions to achieve economic resiliency post COVID-19, and a path forward to sustain and grow a diverse and prosperous economy.

A more comprehensive list of the District's publications and key internet links can be found in [attachment one](#).

How to Provide Feedback?

To provide feedback on District publications, individuals can:

- **Speak with an Employee:** most of our plans and reports have a "Contact Us" reference with an email and/or phone number listed. If they do not, you can contact the appropriate department within the District by referring to our Contacts Directory.
- **Hello Saanich:** want to learn about or provide input into a project or initiative across Saanich? Try our new public participation platform: Hello Saanich.
- **Address Council:** thinking about bringing forward an idea, project or presentation to Council.
- **Accessibility Inquiries:** for questions related to the accessibility of services or programs provided by the District of Saanich contact: accessibilityfeedback@saanich.ca; for accessibility questions related to services or programs provided by the Saanich Police Department contact: accessibility@saanichpolice.ca.
- **DEI Questions:** contact the appropriate department such as Parks, Recreation, Community Services, or Human Resources through the Contacts Directory.

Community Presentations

As per the Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council Committee Terms of Reference, the Committee may:

- *Invite community groups to present and dialogue at committee meetings and encourage groups to engage with the municipality in its ongoing planning process to allow the District to achieve a greater understanding of the strengths and needs of residents of diverse backgrounds and abilities.*
- *Provide an opportunity for community groups to present information on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility through delegations.*

Requests for presentations can be generated by committee members or by an external group/organization and are for the purpose of information only.

Prepared by



Dale Samsonoff
Manager, HR Planning and Programs

Approved by



Sheila Allen
Director, Corporate Services

DS/ds

Attachment one: Key Internet Links

KEY INTERNET LINKS

The Planning Environment:

Topic	Link
Council Strategic Plan	https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/Corporate~and~Annual~Reports/Council%20Strategic%20Plan%202023-2027%20Revision%20Nov2023.pdf
Annual Report	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/corporate-annual-reports/annual-reports.html
Official Community Plan	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/community-planning/official-community-plan-ocp.html
Corporate Strategic Plan	<i>Coming Soon</i>
Accessibility Plan	https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local~Government/Documents/District%20of%20Saanich%20Accessibility%20Plan%20Adopted%20December%202023.pdf
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report and Action Framework	https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Parks~Recreation~and~Community~Services/Documents/Community~Services/Saanich%20DEI%20March12_2023_Final.pdf
Climate Plan	https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/Planning/sustainability/2020-climate-plan-web-v13.0.pdf
Economic Development Plan	https://saanich.ca.granicus.com/Viewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=820&meta_id=63640&ga=2.110403717.1262187153.1710441999-371690653.1695147202
Full List of District of Saanich Plans	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/corporate-annual-reports.html

Mechanisms for Providing Feedback:

Topic	Link
Speak with an Employee	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/footer/connect-with-us/contacts-directory.html
Hello Saanich	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/get-involved/public-participation.html
Address Council	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/mayor-council/addressing-council.html
Accessibility Inquiries – District of Saanich	mailto:accessibilityfeedback@saanich.ca
Accessibility Inquiries – Saanich Police Department	mailto:Accessibility@SaanichPolice.ca
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Inquiries	https://www.saanich.ca/EN/footer/connect-with-us/contacts-directory.html