

AGENDA
ACCESSIBILITY AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To be held at Saanich Municipal Hall
Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams
Wednesday April 02, 2025 at 5:00 PM

The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the ləkʷəŋən 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.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. March 5, 2025 - See Attachment

B. COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

1. CHAIR'S REMARKS
2. STATEMENT REGARDING ADEI – UPDATE
 - COUNCILLOR PHELPS BONDAROFF
3. RICK HANSEN FOUNDATION – ACCESSIBILITY IN BUILDINGS
 - KELLY PERRAIS AND NANCY LYZANIWSKI – REPRESENTATIVES
4. ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS IN THE CRD – MAILING ADDRESS SUPPORT
 - SEAN DHILLON, COMMITTEE MEMBER
5. ACTION LIST DISCUSSION – SEE ATTACHMENT

C. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: May 07, 2025 at 5:00 PM
In order to ensure a 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, Council Chambers and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue
March 05, 2025 at 5:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Councillor Phelps Bondaroff, Sean Dhillon, Sierra Irving, Laurie-Anne Keith, Susan Mader, Swapna Mazumder, Caroline Quan and Rishi Sharma,
Regrets: Manjit Bains and Tony Kiyak
Staff: Carroll Porter, Senior Manager, Human Resources; Mais Hajaj, HR Consultant - Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by S. Mader and Seconded by L. Keith: "That the Minutes of the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting held February 5, 2025, be adopted as circulated."

The following was noted during committee discussion:

- The time stamp on the bottom of the minutes should be 5:00 p.m. not 5:30 p.m.

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Keith, Mader, Mazumder, Quan, Dhillon, Irving, Sharma, Phelps Bondaroff
OPPOSED: None

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair made the following comments:

- The motion made at the February 5, 2025, meeting will be brought forward for Council's consideration at a future meeting. The date has not yet been finalized (Report on file).

MOVED by S. Mader and Seconded by R. Sharma: "That the Agenda be amended to switch items B3 and B2."

RESULT: Carried 8 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Keith, Mader, Mazumder, Quan, Irving, Sharma, Phelps Bondaroff
OPPOSED: None

ADEI STRATEGIC REPORT AND ACTION FRAMEWORK CHECK-IN

The Consultant for Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion gave an update on the ADEI Strategic Report and Action Framework. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The report was well received by Council.
- Some tracked performance initiatives include the number of employees who attended training, total training hours, completed projects, and accessibility improvements across various buildings.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training is not mandatory for staff or managers, but participation is encouraged. Attendance rates remain high, with 675 employees having completed DEI training. Consideration could be given to making DEI training mandatory during the hiring process.
- Approximately 40% of the DEI initiatives are community-focused. Hosting DEI training for the public could be explored.

ADEI ACTION LIST

The Committee reviewed the ADEI Action List, and the following was noted:

- The Union of British Columbia's Municipalities (UBCM) resolutions are due in June and motions are required at the April meeting.
- A presentation from the Rick Hansen Foundation is planned for a future meeting.
- The exploration of expanding and recruiting youth perspectives could be considered.
- Exploring incentives to encourage family doctors, physician assistants, and community clinics to establish their practices in Saanich is an important initiative, though operational expenses remain a concern.
- Preventive health clinics can help reduce future strains on the healthcare system. Parks and Recreation could offer information on current programs available at recreation centers, although this may not fall under the Terms of Reference for the committee.
- Provincial representation on accessibility strategies could assist in providing insight.
- Community services could provide a presentation on upcoming events.
- Reviewing the flag and recognition policy could be considered for future discussion.
- Offering free condoms alongside the free menstrual products in Saanich recreation centres could be considered.
- Provincial regulations on pets in buildings could be a future topic consideration.
- Consideration could be given to reviewing the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) in relation to accessibility. Saanich is working to improve wheelchair access and overall accessibility on roads.
- Diverse and inclusive language procedures are currently found in the DEI Strategic Report and Action Framework. Efforts to enhance these actions are ongoing. International Mother Tongue Day could be included in municipal recognition days.
- Ensure digital and closed captioning services function properly during meetings.
- Tracking iPad usage at customer-facing counters may provide valuable insights.
- Enhance awareness of sensory break rooms and consider offering sensory kits with headphones to improve accessibility.
- Consider offering P.O. boxes to individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk, providing a secure and private alternative to shelter addresses. Consideration could be given to invite the Alliance to End Homelessness in the Capital Region to present.
- Sunflower lanyards indicate that neuro diverse individuals or others may need extra time to process information. These could be used in Saanich facilities as a clear visual cue, eliminating the need for verbal explanation.
- Including accessible wayfinding information could be added to the website.

- The Engineering Department works with the Rick Hansen Foundation to assess building accessibility, with certifications valid for five years. In 2023, three buildings were reviewed, and this year, the Municipal Hall will be assessed.
- A level crossing walkway from Gateway Village to the Municipal Hall could be explored.
- Town Hall meetings offer a new public engagement opportunity and could be made more accessible through recordings, transcription, and closed captioning. Hosting one at University of Victoria (UVic) could also provide access for students. Larger spaces for wheelchairs or individuals who need to be closer to hear are important for accessibility.
- Youth recreational programming and facilities could be reviewed to incorporate physical changes in buildings, ensuring all neuro diverse individuals are included.
- Scent-free environment signage in public spaces would be appreciated.
- A review could be conducted of the new parking policies once they are finalized.
- A future presentation on the plan for a Saanich Equity Office could be scheduled as details are finalized. The addition of a social planner is a consideration.
- The People, Pets, and Parks Strategy could be considered for a future presentation.
- Intergenerational Connectivity is a topic that could be explored.
- The Capital Regional District (CRD) is working on a project to widen trails to improve accessibility.
- Engagement and information about Men's Sheds Canada and programming for older men could be valuable topics for discussion.
- Resources could be compiled to support conflict resolution between neighbours.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from S. Dhillon the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE CLERK

ADEI Advisory Committee Action List

The goal of the 'ADEI Advisory Committee Action List' is to compile a list of potential measures that will serve to achieve the goals outlined in the Committee's Terms of Reference that are not currently covered by ongoing work by the District. The goal of compiling this list is to tap into, and capture, the experience of the current Committee to identify items/policies/actions that Saanich could be working on.

This list has been compiled through conversations with Committee members and conversations with members of the community, and is presented in no particular order, and brief descriptions are provided with each item. My apologies if the descriptions do not exactly match the vision of the folks who presented these to me. Please send me better/more detailed descriptions if you feel this is the case. Likewise, send me any policies, issues, or actions that I may have inadvertently omitted.

I have given the items short titles (in bold) for ease of reference. In some instances, I have combined elements that were similar, and we can discuss if these items are too broad or narrow. I have also included some general questions which may not be policy-generating but will help inform the committee about various Saanich practices and policies.

Please note that when the item calls for an action that falls outside the ambit of the committee (such as spending money or allocating staff time), the item should be read as a request from the ADEI Advisory Committee to Council to accomplish this action or the appropriate procedural course of action. Similarly, some policies fall outside of the power of the District, and in these cases, the action would likely take the form of a letter to a higher level of government or resolution through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) or the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). In some instances these are identified, in others, they can be assumed or may be part of a broader discussion of options to address the issue.

I will be including marginal notes with updates on items when we have had the opportunity to explore items. This list will be updated and circulated between committee members regularly, and when we have a lighter agenda, the plan is to dip into the list to explore items at the desire of the committee.

Action Items

- **Youth Engagement** – Explore ways of involving young people in District affairs. Saanich has spots earmarked for youth reps on each of their advisory committees however these often go unfilled. Some ways we can increase youth engagement include:
 - **Committee Recruitment** – Explore how Saanich currently reaches out to schools, colleges, universities and other youth groups to recruit young

people to serve on committees and explore ways of doing more engagement.

- **Youth Rep** – Some municipalities have a designated youth rep on Council.
- **Youth Advisory Committee** – The City of Victoria has a [Youth Council](#), this could serve as a lower barrier way to engage with a number of young people who can provide input to Council on a wide range of issues.
- **Course Credit** – Work with UVic and other regional PSE institutions to arrange for course credit or something similar for students who join and participate in Saanich advisory committees.
- **Get More Family Doctors in Saanich** – Explore ways of Saanich encouraging, incenting, and facilitating more family doctors establishing themselves in Saanich, and supporting existing doctors and medical professionals to help their practices flourish and serve as many Saanich residents as possible. Discussion should begin with an exploration of what type of direction does the committee want to give Council. We can make a broad recommendation, like requesting that Council direct staff to investigate and report back on measure the District can adopt to increase the number of family doctors in the community, or we could request that Council direct staff to explore specific measures, such as:
 - Granting Permissive Tax Exemptions for Doctors Offices and Clinics.
 - Use Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) to incent developers to build more clinic spaces in mixed use developments.
 - Surveying existing Saanich properties to identify any that could serve as a clinic.
 - Building/converting one or more properties into clinics, using a similar model adopted by Colwood.
- **Preventative Health Support**
 - Ways the District can support preventative health.
 - Ask Parks and Recreation staff to present on programs relating to preventative health.
- **Invite Chief Accessibility Officer as speaker** – To brief the committee on the ongoing work being done in the country.
 - Translating federal legislation to the municipal level.
 - Bringing in Provincial representation on accessibility. (Dana L)
 - Stephanie Cadieux (Chief Accessibility Officer)
- **External-facing initiatives being held by the Community Services Division at the District.**
 - Ask staff to present to the committee.
- **Flag and Recognition Policy** – Review Saanich's flag and recognition policies.
- **Reproductive Justice** – Provide free condoms in Saanich rec centres.
- **Menstrual Equity** – Explore ways of building on Saanich's free menstrual product policy. Saanich already has free menstrual products in our washrooms,

these are disposable products. Do we want to explore providing reusable products at some key rec facilities (menstrual cups and cloth pads?).

- **Scooters and Mobility Devices in Bike Lanes Pilot Update** – Receive an update on the District's current participation in a regional pilot exploring kick scooters in bike lanes. This pilot until April 2028, so we may want to do a mid-way check in, if data is available.
- **Mailing Address Support for those Experiencing Homelessness** – Those experiencing homelessness often struggle to maintain a fixed address. Some municipalities have helped address this situation by creating free to low-cost postal boxes that are made available to those in need.
- **Invisible Disabilities** – Explore the ways in which the District is helping support people with invisible disabilities and investigate ways these measures can be improved. (Sunflower lanyards, wayfinding, websites)
- **Accessibility and Town Halls** – Saanich has recently begun this new public engagement this past year. Explore the existing practices around town halls from an accessibility lens.
 - Sound, temperature, space, and seating
- **Different Cognitive Abilities** - Exploring ways of ensuring folks with diverse cognitive abilities are represented, heard, and included with a specific focus on youth programming and facilities. What measures are we adopting to reduce barriers to people with complex needs at our recreation centres?
- **Review Scent Free Policies at Saanich Facilities** – What policies do we currently have? Are these adequate?
- **Parking Policy** – Ensure Saanich's parking bylaw review supports accessibility.
- **Hiring a Social Planner** – Call on Council to ask staff to hire a social planner for the District. A social planner in a municipality analyzes community needs and develops policies, programs, and services to enhance social well-being and equity. They collaborate with government agencies, nonprofits, and residents to address issues such as housing, accessibility, public health, and social inclusion. Their work ensures that municipal planning considers the diverse needs of all citizens, promoting a more livable and inclusive community. Saanich does not currently employ a social planner, and as a result, the work of the social planner is falling to other staff. For example, Council recently asked staff to explore increasing the number of shelter beds in the District, and this work has fallen to staff to do in addition to their current workplans. Having a dedicated staff position would allow us to hire someone specialized in this field, with time allocated specifically to social planning.
- **Future Presentation on Equity Office**
- **Review Saanich's Commemoration and Celebration Calendar** – Review for inclusion of community groups in Saanich.

- **Accessibility in Parks** – Explore accessibility in our parks. Recognizing that this also intersects with the work and ToR of the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee.
- **Intergenerational Connectivity** – How can the District foster and support intergenerational connectivity.
- **CRD Trail Widening** – Get an update on CRD trail widening and how this may impact accessibility.
- **Man Sheds and Programming for Older Men** – What is the situation with the Saanich Volunteer Society 'Man Shed' and what can the District do to support the creation of more of these in Saanich? Man Sheds are spaces with programming specifically targeting older men, a demographic particularly impacted by loneliness and isolation. Explore what kind of programming Parks and Rec offers to support this demographic.
- **Conflict Resolution Resources for Neighbours** – Conflicts can sometimes occur between neighbours and often if left unchecked, these can fester and worsen over time. Saanich could assemble some helpful resources for people to direct them to conflict resolution and mediation tools to help resolve conflicts and prevent them from escalating.
- **Expanding DEI Training to Community Associations etc.**
- **Exploring Making DEI Training a Requirement**