

**MINUTES**  
**ACCESSIBILITY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Committee Rm. 2 and via Microsoft Teams  
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon, Victoria B.C.  
**May 31, 2023, at 5:01 pm**

Present: Councillor Mena Westhaver (via Teams), Maya Bosdet (via Teams), Rae Franklin, Tracy Grimsrud, Stephan Herman, Kam Judge (5:13 p.m.), Laurie-Anne Keith, Donald Kennedy, Rachid Ouache (via Teams), Reed Poynter.

Staff: Sheila Allen, Director, Corporate Services; Troy McKay, Senior Manager of Transportation & Development Services (6:28 p.m.); Samuel Dubois, Human Resources Manager; Megan Squires, Senior Transportation Planner (6:20 p.m.); Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Swapna Mazumber

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by S. Herman and Seconded by T. Grimsrud: “That the Minutes of the Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting dated May 3, 2023, be adopted.”**

**CARRIED**

**CHAIR’S REMARKS**

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

- The excitement and energy were noticeable at the May 3, 2023, meeting.
- The desire from the committee is to see the District of Saanich become a more inclusive and accessible place to live and work.

**STRATEGIC OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

The Chair encouraged members to review the memo, which was attached to the agenda and to contact the Planning Department with any questions or concerns.

**DISABILITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGY PRESENTATION**

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

- The goal for the session is to increase the knowledge of disability awareness and to provide an overview of the *Accessible British Columbia Act (2021)* and the requirements for the District of Saanich.
- In British Columbia (B.C.) 20.5% of adults have a disability and their employment rate is noticeably lower than the general population.

- More than a ¼ of workplace discrimination and harassment reports are made from people with disabilities.
- On September 1, 2023, Saanich is required to have a plan posted publicly, with a tool to receive feedback, and be updated every 3 years.
- The guiding principles in the Act that will be implemented in the written plan for Saanich are inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, universal design.
- The legislation requires that accessibility committees, to the extent possible, have at least half of its members be persons with disabilities or represent a disability-serving organization, represent the diversity of British Columbians, and have Indigenous representation.
- Of the standards that are listed to be implemented, employment, serviced delivery and the built environment are of focus at this time.
- 1 in 5 Canadians have one or more disabilities according to the Canadian Survey on Disability (2017).
- Disabilities can fluctuate between invisible, permanent, and temporary.
- Intersectionality must be addressed to create a truly inclusive society.
- There is a shift in the way society views disabilities.
- People with disabilities deserve equal rights and responsibilities to contribute to society.
- Poor lighting, inaccessible parking and emergency equipment are examples of physical and environmental barriers.

**MOVED by S. Herman and Seconded by L. Keith: “That the meeting recess for seven minutes for smaller working group discussions.”**

**CARRIED**

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The meeting recessed at 5:47 p.m. and resumed at 5:54 p.m.

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- Some communication and information barriers are: inaccessible job advertisements, videos that are not captioned and the use of high-level language.
- Large print or Braille, short sentences, and plain language, are some alternate formats that will help to limit communication and information barriers.

**MOVED by S. Herman and Seconded by T. Grimsrud: “That the meeting recess for seven minutes for smaller working group discussions.”**

**CARRIED**

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The meeting recessed at 6:10 p.m. and resumed at 6:17 p.m.

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- Using accessibility checkers and assistive technology will ensure that all forms of communication is accessible.

**MOVED by S. Herman and Seconded by D. Kennedy: “That the meeting recess for seven minutes for smaller working group discussions.”**

**CARRIED**

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The meeting recessed at 6:20 p.m. and resumed at 6:27 p.m.

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- The District of Saanich strives to model inclusivity.
- Person-centric language is an inclusive way to address someone.

**MOVED by L. Keith and Seconded by K. Judge: “That the meeting recess for seven minutes for smaller working group discussions.”**

**CARRIED**

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The meeting recessed at 6:41 p.m. and resumed at 6:48 p.m.

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- The disability icon will be changed to an active accessibility icon.
- Inclusive language and unconscious bias training would be useful tools for Saanich employees.
- Input from the public and disability serving organizations is planned for the fall.

**MOVED by S. Herman and Seconded by T. Grimsrud: “That the meeting recess for three minutes for smaller working group discussions.”**

**CARRIED**

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The meeting recessed at 6:50 p.m. and resumed at 6:53 p.m.

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- A draft plan will be available in September for the committee members to review.
- Interviews with Department Representatives outlines steps that have already been achieved to limit or remove barriers.
- A commitment statement will be added to the Accessibility Plan and posted on the Saanich website.

## **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION UPDATE**

The Senior Transportation Planner gave an overview of the Active Transportation Plan, and the following was noted:

- The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) has not been updated since its adoption in 2018. It is a guide for active transportation network improvements over a 30-year period.
- The District of Saanich is committed to monitoring and updating the ATP so that it is relevant and actionable for the next 5 years.
- The committee will offer feedback on the accessibility and equity portion of the plan.

Beth Hurford, Transportation Consultant, gave a presentation (PowerPoint on file), and the following was noted:

- A survey is available online for feedback.
- The update process is in phase 4, “Draft Plan and Update Review”. The final ATP is projected to be considered for adoption in the fall of 2023.
- Demographic and travel data has been gathered from the 2021 Census.
- The ATP runs parallel with the Road Safety Action Plan (RSAP).
- Opportunities and desires for an equitable transportation system were not included in the 2018 ATP.
- The ATP vision update is to see a universally accessible community that is safe for all people. A shift to sustainable transportation will enhance well-being and climate goals.
- The goals for the 2023 update are to:
  - Support sustainable transportation
  - Shift active modes of transportation to reduce vehicle trips
  - Eliminate all fatalities and injuries on Saanich roads and trails
  - Create more connections for active living
  - Build a network that is accessible and provides equitable mobility options
- Equity deserving areas are loosely identified through the 2021 census data and an equity analysis conducted by Saanich.
- Various engagement activities such as open houses, pop ups and promotions are happening throughout the District.

The committee made the following comments:

- Differentiating between the words “convenient” and “accessible” will help to clarify the vision.
- Accessibility guidance for building infrastructure has been provided by Provincial engagement strategies, the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) and local community engagements.
- “Walking, rolling and cycling” and “travelling with the use of a mobility device” has been

- added for a more inclusive language.
- 65-70% of the streetlights in Saanich have been changed to LED lighting to provide more access to low lit areas.
- A free youth pass for B.C. Transit is needed.
- All the trails that are identified in the plan are hard surfaced.

\*\*\* Laurie-Anne Keith exited the meeting at 7:07 p.m.\*\*\*

The Chair thanked staff for the presentations and asked for any final comments and the following was noted:

- Members felt included watching and listening from home on Teams.

\*\*\*T. McKay, M. Squires, and B. Hurford exited the meeting at 7:29 p.m.\*\*\*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, 2023.

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Councillor Westhaver, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk