

MINUTES

ACCESSIBILITY AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

770 Vernon Avenue

November 05, 2025, at 5:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Councillor Teale Phelps Bondaroff, Manjit Bains, Sean Dhillon, Sierra Irving, Laurie-Anne Keith, Susan Mader, Caroline Quan, and Rishi Sharma,

Regrets: Tony Kiyak, Swapna Mazumder, and Etemadi-Shad Marjan

Staff: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager of Community Services; Carroll Porter, Senior Manager of Human Resource; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Kathleen Gallagher, Senior Transportation Planner; Mais Hajaj, HR Consultant - Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Specialist and Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by S. Mader and Seconded by S. Irving: “That the Minutes of the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting held October 1, 2025, be adopted as circulated.”

RESULT: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Bains, Keith, Mader, Mazumder, Quan, Irving, Phelps Bondaroff

OPPOSED: None

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair thanked the committee for their time spent this term.

NEIGHBOURHOOD BIKEWAY IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION PROJECT

The Senior Transportation Planner gave a presentation on the Neighbourhood Bikeway Identification and Prioritization Project (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Targeted design features may be considered in areas identified as less safe, including options to further separate vehicle and bicycle traffic. Wayfinding elements will be added, particularly in neighbourhoods without sidewalks.
- Road surfaces and widths will remain unchanged, with all improvements occurring within the existing road footprint and no anticipated impact to trees.
- Traffic-calming measures may include speed humps, traffic diversions, and sharrow markings to indicate shared lanes for cyclists and motorists.
- A public education video could be developed to demonstrate how to navigate bike lanes and shared roads.
- Performance measures will be used to monitor project outcomes.

** R. Sharma exited the meeting at 5:31 p.m.**

** The Senior Transportation Planner exited the meeting at 5:35 p.m.**

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT ON CURRENT YOUTH PROGRAMMING

The Community Programmer II gave a presentation on the Community Services Department on Current Youth and Programming (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Youth are exhibiting increased anxiety and behavioural dysregulation following the pandemic.
- A sense of helplessness is being observed among youth.
- A 2024 training session supported youth interested in assisting individuals with diverse needs. Mentors work with program leaders to adapt activities that promote inclusion, with support from inclusion leaders.
- Programming is offered from September to June in youth centres for ages 11 to 17.
- A full-time staff member in the Community Services Department, supported by Island Health, provides disability inclusion services for children attending camps. This in-house model is considered unique and progressive.
- Space for dysregulated teens is limited; however, sensory support kits are available, and youth can select programs aligned with their interests.
- Some programs are scheduled during lower-light, less busy times to offer a calmer environment.
- Demographic data is not currently collected for program participants.
- Youth services programming is community-led, offering activities such as Pride Prom, trauma-informed yoga, Indigenous drumming, and newcomer events. High participation has resulted in full program capacity and demand for additional sessions.
- Relationships with local schools help identify program ideas and emerging needs among youth.

M. Bains exited the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

The Senior Manager of Community Services and the Community Programmer II exited the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

QUADRA MCKENZIE PLAN – COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The committee discussed the Quadra Mckenzie Plan (QMP).

- The plan aims to encourage active transportation while continuing to accommodate other modes of travel.
- Concerns were raised that frequent intersections, traffic-calming measures, and potential road closures could contribute to traffic congestion and increased emissions.
- Protecting garry oaks, maintaining tree canopies, and ensuring replanting commitments is important.
- Clear communication and feedback from residents in directly affected areas is essential to the success of the plan.
- Approximately 60% of Saanich's housing stock is single-family and 40% multi-family. More diverse housing options are intended to help bridge this gap.

MOVED by S. Dhillon and Seconded by S. Mader: "That the Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee receive the report on the Quadra Mckenzie Plan for information."

- The committee's role is to review and provide feedback, not to formally endorse the plan.

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Keith, Mader, Quan, Dhillon, Irving, Phelps Bondaroff

OPPOSED: None

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ADAPTATION WORKSHOP

The Sustainability Specialist led a Community Climate Adaption Workshop (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- A neighbourhood watch model could be expanded to include checking on neighbours' needs during emergencies, particularly climate-related events.
- The Saanich Emergency Program provides resources, training, and staff support to help residents develop neighbourhood emergency action plans. Additional education, funding, equipment, and support, including considerations for children, pets, and medications, could be explored to further strengthen community preparedness.
- Neighbour-to-Neighbour grants are available to support local initiatives such as heat response plans and power outage plans.
- considerations for children, pets, medications, and evacuation preparedness.
- Emergency preparedness efforts focus on enabling residents to safely shelter at home during most climate-related hazards.
- Home-based preparedness measures, such as backup power and improved indoor air quality, were identified as key areas for further exploration.
- A community-led project could be explored where neighbours develop a shared meeting space equipped with a solar phone charger, emergency plans, supplies, and communication tools.
- The Heat Pump Financing Program assists residents transitioning from oil heating to heat pumps.
- New permanent beds are available at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre for extreme weather events.
- Several Saanich facilities are promoted as free public spaces during extreme weather events. Increased promotion and awareness are needed.
- The Capital Regional District (CRD) Urban Heat Mapping project identified the Tillicum area as highly vulnerable to extreme heat due to low tree canopy cover and older buildings with limited cooling. Thirteen rain gardens, approximately 1,200 native plants, and additional trees have been incorporated across three school sites in the area. These projects have increased shade, tree canopy cover, stormwater retention, water quality, and overall ecosystem health.
- Providing emergency accommodations for animals could be explored.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from S. Irving the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE CLERK