



CITY OF WEST KELOWNA

MINUTES OF THE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, February 21, 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2760 CAMERON ROAD, WEST KELOWNA, BC

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rusty Ensign, Chair (virtual)
Melissa Grassmick (virtual)
Karen Hartwig
Candice Henriques (virtual)
Councillor Garrett Millsap
Danielle Needham
Vittoria Spindor (virtual)
Councillor Carol Zanon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mieke Krus
Sonia Newman

Staff Present: Melissa Hunt-Anderson, Community and Social Development Coordinator
Corinne Boback, Legislative Services Manager/Corporate Officer
Natasha Patricelli, Legislative Services Assistant

Others Present: Spring Hawes, Disability and Ableism and Lived Experience Education
Consultant

1. CALL THE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.

It was acknowledged that this meeting was held on the traditional territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Peoples.

This meeting was open to the public. This meeting was webcast live and archived on the City's website.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded

THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Accessibility and Inclusion Committee meeting held Wednesday, January 24, 2024 in the City of West Kelowna Council Chambers

It was moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the Accessibility and Inclusion Committee meeting held Wednesday, January 24, 2024 in the City of West Kelowna Council Chambers be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Project Scope and Timeline Overview

Melissa Hunt-Anderson, Staff Liaison reviewed the project scope, timeline and action plan for completing the City of West Kelowna Accessibility Plan.

5.2 Feedback Form/Survey Final Review

Spring Hawes, Disability and Ableism and Lived Experience Education Consultant reviewed the final survey for the Committee. Staff, Council and the public will have the opportunity to fill out the feedback form.

- Suggestion to change survey question to say "What neighbourhood of West Kelowna do you live in?";
- Suggestion to change survey question to move Westbank First Nation as the second to last option, following the West Kelowna neighbourhoods and before Outside of West Kelowna;
- Suggestion for consistency in capitalization throughout the document;
- Suggestion for staff to look into incentives for completing the survey;
- People will participate in the survey because it is a good opportunity to share their accessibility barriers;

- Feedback form will be shared with the community - on the website, paper copies available at City Hall and the Seniors Centre, social media posts, in person engagement opportunities and QR codes on public facilities;
- Visually impaired consideration - Surveys sometimes have barriers to answering these surveys. Recommendation to include alternative options at the beginning of the survey to avoid frustration at the end of the survey when it can't be submitted. Melissa will have her phone number or email to complete the feedback form on behalf of anyone who needs assistance completing the form;
- Suggestion to include a QR code on the utility bill to promote survey participation;
- Engagement plan will be shared with the Committee.

5.3 Summary and Review of Existing Accessibility Policies

Spring Hawes, Disability and Ableism and Lived Experience Education Consultant reviewed City of West Kelowna documents for accessibility and inclusion. Highlights included Julia's Junction and the City of West Kelowna waterfront.

- Guiding documents, organizational policies and practices, and accessibility in the community were areas that were assessed for accessibility;
- Key findings included: Accessibility is a part of the Community Vision, the Official Community Plan mentions Universal Design, Accessibility work is ongoing in the Annual Report, Housing for people with disabilities is a direction in the Housing Strategy, and accessibility is a recommendation in the Parks Master Plan;
- Accessibility is important for Council and the Community, it is clear through the City documents;
- Suggested areas of improvement include adding: definitions and accessibility references to planning documents, accessibility to OCP Public Health and Safety Objectives, and an accessibility lens to the Transportation Master Plan.

5.4 Visioning Exercise

Five pillars to help us vision an accessible future to embed accessibility throughout the municipality.

Pillar 1: Our People - how do our people connect with the idea of accessibility? For example: Public Events have an ASL interpreter.

- We embrace and support people with disabilities;
- Different kinds of barriers to think about: information and communication, policies and practices, recruitment, environmental, accesses, technology and transportation;
- Transportation/sidewalk is a huge barrier for people with vision loss, strollers, walkers and wheelchairs;
- Sports or recreational programs - team sports for people of all ages with disabilities currently in West Kelowna;
- Pedestrian cross walks and street crossings - audio signals, safe passage up and down (curb cuts) tactile bumps and contrast, consistency with neighbouring communities;
- Street signs - lower position, black background with yellow and white lettering is easier for vision impaired for people to see with large font;
- Continuity of sidewalks brings people to the City if it is easily accessible.

Pillar 2: Our Connectivity - sustainable transportation options

- Environmental - electric vehicles and busses;
- Transit - longer times/schedules, audio for bus stops in addition to visual screen;
- Bus Terminals could include: visible covers, lower signs, plug in for earphones, more WIFI accessibility, yellow bumps on the side of the road so people know where to get on the bus;
- Accessibility for dogs to come on busses and into buildings;
- Parking lots - accessible parking stalls are painted on the pavement, when there is snow the logo is covered - recommendation for stand up signs to be seen through all seasons;
- Blue lights for emergency vehicles at intersections;
- Enforcing Good Neighbour Bylaw to ensure clear sidewalks during the winter season;

- Suggestion for City event planning to include accessibility routes and support;
- Transit System is run through the Province which is outside the City of West Kelowna scope. BC Transit Accessibility Plan will be shared with the Committee;
- Sidewalk improvements - ramp at one end of the sidewalk but at the other end of the sidewalk doesn't have a ramp is frustrating. A temporary solution could be to install a sign at the sidewalk to show that there is no ramp at the other end of the sidewalk until it could be permanently fixed.

Pillar 3: Our Adaptability

- Audible information at bus stops;
- WIFI at bus stops would be embracing change and technology;
- Consistency is helpful when it is used throughout the City;

Pillar 4: Our Prosperity

- Encouraging businesses to be physically accessible and an accessible place of work through employment policies;
- Model as a City accessible work spaces and places to create best practices to be more inclusive;
- Hire people with diverse abilities;
- Suggestion for business and best practice awards - City event to celebrate people with disabilities;
- Using terminologies that put people first not just their disabilities - to use a more positive light. Having a policy around language use/guide and the most "person with vision loss" "person who is partially sighted" encouraging the use of the word person before the disability;
- City to take a leadership role to hire staff with disabilities - involve people with disabilities in planning and consulting. Recommendation for a disability consultant for any new or future City projects to make the project successful for all;
- Using an accessibility lens in all planning projects - doesn't directly says to be done by a consultant but includes it as a consideration. Possibility to be a role of the Committee in the future?

Pillar 5: Our Places

- Parks and playgrounds use unitary surfacing when building or renovating - why build a new park that is not accessible to everyone;
- Washrooms - something to tell you what is for men and women and include adult size change tables;
- Accessible picnic tables.

The Committee was asked to share more input to better our plan - What is Missing? What does an Accessible West Kelowna look like to you?

5.5 AIC Accessibility Message

The Accessibility Plan will include a statement from the Accessibility and Inclusion Committee. The Committee was asked what they would like to see as their message in the plan. Accessibility messages and a vision statement from other municipalities were reviewed as examples.

The Committee was asked to review committee statements and email ideas for staff to bring forward a draft to the next Committee meeting.

6. DELEGATIONS

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. REFERRALS

9. CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ITEMS

10. OTHER BUSINESS

11. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

CHAIR

RECORDING SECRETARY