



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Accessibility Advisory Committee

Adopted by Council: 4/5/2023

Amended by Council: 3/20/2024

MANDATE

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is a select committee of Council established under section 142 of the [Community Charter](#) in accordance with section 9 of the [Accessible British Columbia Act](#). The mandate of the committee is to provide advice on policies, programs, services, built environments, infrastructure and outdoor spaces in order to continue to improve the livability, inclusivity and accessibility for persons with *Disabilities*, who live, work and play in North Cowichan.

DEFINITIONS

"BARRIER" means anything that prevents a person with a *Disability* from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their *Disability*, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

"DISABILITY" means:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the [Workers Compensation Act](#).

"EQUITY-SEEKING GROUP" means communities that face significant collective challenges in participating in society as a result of *Barriers* to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, marginalization that could be created by attitudinal, historic, social and environmental *Barriers* based on the intersections of age, ethnicity, *Disability*, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc.

DUTIES

The Committee exists to provide support to Council by:

- (a) Identifying *Barriers* for persons with *Disabilities* in North Cowichan,
- (b) Raising awareness about accessibility and inclusion of people with *Disabilities*,
- (c) Identifying and liaising with local stakeholders, including other levels of government, to establish partnerships and collaboration related to improving access and inclusion for people with *Disabilities*,

- (d) Advising staff on strategies to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of municipal services, programs, facilities and other infrastructure, including the identification and removal of *Barriers* that hinder full participation in the community by some North Cowichan residents,
- (e) Responding to referrals from Council related to accessibility issues for persons with *Disabilities*,
- (f) Responding to staff requests for input on new projects to identify and address accessibility concerns,
- (g) Providing feedback to staff in the development of an accessibility plan for North Cowichan, including future updates to the plan, and,
- (h) Providing advice on public awareness campaigns to promote North Cowichan's efforts to make its services, facilities, and infrastructure accessible and *Barrier-free*.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall consist of at least 5, and up to 9, voting members, including the Council member appointed as the Committee Chair. Membership is limited to people with lived experience or accessibility challenges.

Membership shall include:

- (a) At least 1 member must be an Indigenous person from a local First Nation community, and,
- (b) At least 2 members must be persons with *Disabilities* or individuals who support or represent an organization who supports persons with *Disabilities*.

APPOINTMENT AND TERM

To ensure a fair and equitable representation of the diversity of North Cowichan and British Columbia as a whole, in accordance with section 9 of the [Accessible British Columbia Act](#) and section 5.12 of the [Council Advisory Body Policy](#), Council will aspire to appoint individuals representing a broad range of under-served and *Equity-Seeking-Groups*.

Members shall be appointed by resolution of Council. The term for all members, with the exception of the Chair, shall coincide with the term of Council. The Chair shall be appointed for the term as appointed by Council.

STAFF SUPPORT

The staff liaison to the Committee will notify Council in writing of any membership changes.

MEETINGS AND REPORTING TO COUNCIL

The Committee shall meet on a quarterly basis, or at the call of the Chair.

The procedures for meeting conduct and reporting back to Council are set out in the [Council Procedure Bylaw](#) and the [Council Advisory Body Policy](#).