

**DATE:** February 4, 2021

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Chris Gobbi, Chair, Advisory Committee on Accessibility

**SUBJECT:** Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2020 Annual Report

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2020 Work Plan  
Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2021 Work Plan  
Terms of Reference for Advisory Committee on Accessibility

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. APPROVES the Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2021 Work Plan attached to the report dated February 4, 2021 from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility; and,
2. RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated February 4, 2021 from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility titled "Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2020 Annual Report."

#### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the activities and achievements of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, as well as provide the Committee's proposed 2021 work plan for Council's consideration.

#### BACKGROUND:

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is a Committee of Council with a mandate to advise Mayor and Council, and City Staff on the identification, removal and prevention of physical and social barriers, which impede the full participation of all citizens in every aspect of community life. The Committee is guided by the Advisory Committee on Accessibility Terms of Reference.

#### WORK OF COMMITTEE DURING 2020:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 24, 2020 all council committees were suspended from meeting. Prior to Council approving the use of electronic participation in council committee meetings at their December 7, 2020 regular Council meeting, the Committee only met once, on November 26, 2020. Thereafter, regular monthly meetings resumed.

The lack of regular meetings throughout the 2020 term severely limited the ability of the Committee to enact the approved 2020 work plan. This has resulted in many items being deferred to the 2021 work plan.

In the limited meetings that have been held, the Committee continued to provide comment and feedback on Accessibility improvements to Civic Facilities and Parks including Masich Place and Forests of the World.

On July 30, 2020, members of the Committee toured Masich Place and provided comments and recommendations for further enhancements to the Accessibility improvements underway for that facility.

The Committee continued to have discussions with City Staff regarding pedestrian safety and access during construction and road closures. This continuing issue was to be a focus in 2020, but the lack of regular meetings and changes to City Staff prevented significant progress. This item will continue to be a focus in 2021.

#### **OVERVIEW OF 2021 WORK PLAN:**

Attached to this report is a copy of the proposed 2021 work plan. As in previous years, much of the work of the Committee is continuous and ongoing in nature. This is reflected in a large amount of the 2020 work plan carrying over into 2021.

As mentioned in the previous section, a priority focus for the Committee in 2021 will be continuing to work with Administration to address ongoing issues surrounding pedestrian safety around construction sites, both for City projects and private development.

The Committee will continue to advise on the accessibility of City-lead development and projects. While progress has been made in past years, the new downtown pool and library entrance being notable examples, the lack of accessibility in the new downtown parking facility on 6<sup>th</sup> avenue reveal that much work is still to be done in ensuring that new facilities are truly accessible to all.

In 2021, the Committee plans to establish working groups to focus on specific areas of the work plan. Specifically, to develop education and outreach materials, explore virtual engagement opportunities in light of the likelihood of continued restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to thoroughly review and propose amendments to the Terms of Reference.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The work of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility aligns with the Council Priority to *Make Prince George accessible and enjoyable for everyone, regardless of their age or ability.*

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

The Committee is not proposing any changes to their Terms of Reference at this time.

#### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is tasked with aiding in the removal of physical and social barriers, which impede full participation of all citizens in every aspect of community life. The last few years have seen the committee continue to form relationships with different departments within the City and be given the opportunity to have input into most City projects planning and development processes. 2020 was a challenging year for the committee as we are sure it was for the entire city. The Committee was unable to meet for most of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions associated with it. Due to these

unprecedented times we have decided to carry most of our 2020 work plan forward to 2021 with some changes to wording and a few additions. The committee, even with the limited meetings, had a few things they wanted to highlight. We were very excited to see the main entrance to the Public Library and the new Downtown Fire Hall completed during the year as well as the ground breaking ceremony for the new pool. The Accessibility Committee had amazing opportunities for input into all of these projects and it is exciting to see them coming to fruition. The Accessibility Committee was also given the opportunity to tour Masich Place on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in order to provide comments and suggestions during the construction process. We are happy to report that at a recent meeting we were shown the completed project, which had most if not all of our recommendations implemented.

As much as these types of projects show the inroads City Staff, Mayor and Council, and the committee have made over the past years; there is still reason for concern about accessibility in city owned properties, which was recently highlighted to us in a review of the new 6<sup>th</sup> Ave Parkade. The parkade has zero (0) accessible parking stalls on the top level, no way to exit the parking lot currently without using stairs, and other major accessibility deficiencies. Unfortunately this project never came before this committee at any stage due to the type of project. This shows us there is still much work to do to ensure all city owned properties are designed and developed using an Accessibility lens.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is normally able to provide input on private development through its representation on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design. While this work was severely limited in 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic, our committee still has a representative sitting on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design and is looking forward to continuing to provide input through these meetings in the future.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility also has a representative on the recently formed Select Committee on Poverty Reduction. This committee did continue to meet in a workshop format over the last year and our representative on the committee provided an update on the work they have done over the past year at our meeting on January 7, 2021.

The Committee looks forward to continuing its work of removing barriers for all citizens in the City of Prince George. In the challenging year of 2020 we continued to see a strong focus from Mayor and Council on improving accessibility in our community. As previously mentioned no matter how far we have come there is always still room to improve and we all look forward to working with City staff and Mayor and Council moving forward as we continue to strive towards the shared goal of an inclusive, equitable and barrier free Prince George.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Chris Gobbi, Chair Advisory Committee on Accessibility

**APPROVED:**

Walter Babicz, Acting City Manager

Meeting Date: 2021/03/08



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY 2020 WORK PLAN

Action Item	Committee Member Responsibilities	Target Completion Date	Status (Completion Date)	Additional Follow Up
1. Provide feedback regarding accessibility barriers and best practices to ensure City services and City-owned infrastructure is inclusive and accessible.				
1A. Provide feedback on major construction and alterations of City-owned buildings and parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
1B. Provide recommendations for prioritizing accessibility improvements to City buildings financed through the annual \$50,000 budget for improving accessibility in civic facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Revise for 2021
1C. Provide feedback on proposed changes to City policies and bylaws that affect accessibility and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
1D. Continue to report barriers in civic facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
1E. Assist Administration on categorizing and prioritizing findings from Civic Facility Audits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
1F. Be a resource for Administration to support key action items in the City's Age Friendly Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
2. Track and report on barriers that pedestrians encounter on City sidewalks, trails and walkways.				
2A. Continue to report and track pedestrian network issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
2B. Provide recommendations to City staff to inform the 2020/2021 sidewalk improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	December 2020		
2C. Work with Administration to improve sidewalk closure procedure and compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	December 2020	Ongoing	Prioritize in 2021



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY 2020 WORK PLAN

3. Provide advice and guidance relating to accessibility, inclusivity, and barrier-free development through participation on other Council Committees, as required.				
3A. Representative on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
3B. Representative on the Select Committee on Poverty Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
3C. Present to the Advisory Committee on Development Design to build capacity about accessible design for the exterior of multi-family residential, commercial and industrial developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Spring 2020	Ongoing	Continue in 2021
4. Outreach and education to raise awareness about accessibility and inclusion issues.				
4A. Develop informational and engagement materials to use at events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Summer 2020	Not started	Revise for 2021
4B. Identify opportunities for presenting to interested parties about accessibility, and to host information booths at relevant events (i.e. Access Awareness Day).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Revise for 2021



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY 2021 WORK PLAN

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1A. Provide feedback on major construction and alterations of City-owned buildings and parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
1B. Provide recommendations for prioritizing accessibility improvements to City buildings financed through the annual budget for improving accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
1C. Provide feedback on proposed changes to City policies and bylaws that affect accessibility and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
1D. Continue to report barriers in civic facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
1E. Assist Administration on categorizing and prioritizing findings from Civic Facility Audits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
1F. Be a resource for Administration to support key action items in the City's Age Friendly Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
2. Track and report on barriers that pedestrians encounter on City sidewalks, trails and walkways.				
2A. Continue to report and track pedestrian network issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
2B. Provide recommendations to City staff to inform the 2021/2022 sidewalk improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	December 2021		
2C. Work with Administration to improve sidewalk closure procedure and compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Committee Members</li> </ul>	Spring 2021		



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY 2021 WORK PLAN

3. Provide advice and guidance relating to accessibility, inclusivity, and barrier-free development through participation on other Council Committees, as required.				
3A. Representative on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
3B. Representative on the Select Committee on Poverty Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
3C. Present to the Advisory Committee on Development Design to build capacity about accessible design for the exterior of multi-family residential, commercial and industrial developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be Selected in April</li> </ul>	Spring 2021		
4. Outreach and education to raise awareness about accessibility and inclusion issues.				
4A. Develop informational and engagement materials to use at events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Working Group to be selected in April</li> </ul>	Summer 2021		
4B. Explore virtual engagement opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Working Group to be selected in April</li> </ul>	Ongoing		
5. Review and recommend changes to Terms of Reference				
5A. Review and amend mandate as established in Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Working Group to be selected in April</li> </ul>	Winter 2021		



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Advisory Committee Name:	Advisory Committee on Accessibility
Meeting Frequency:	Monthly

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is an advisory committee of Council established in accordance with the *Community Charter* and “*City of Prince George Council Procedures Bylaw No. 8388, 2011.*”

## 2. PURPOSE AND MANDATE

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility, hereafter referred to as the “Committee”, is to advise Mayor and Council of the City of Prince George, hereafter referred to as “Council”, and City Staff on the identification, removal and prevention of physical and social barriers which impede the full participation of all citizens in every aspect of community life. Specifically the committee will:

- Provide advice on matters Council is considering which affect all citizens with access issues;
- Solicit feedback from the community on issues relating to all citizens with access issues, and bring to Council matters identified by the Committee as requiring action by the Municipality;
- Work cooperatively with Civic Departments, Boards, Commissions and Committees whose activities affect access issues, including:
  - a) Provide advice and information on directions for future planning of municipal services, programs and facilities;
  - b) Monitor municipal services, programs and facilities to ensure full participation of all citizens; and
  - c) Evaluate the progress of activities based on a) and b) above;
- Inform citizens of the existence and mission of this Committee and to work with them to identify existing social and physical barriers;
- Work with Council to increase public awareness of the issues of accessibility and inclusion of all citizens;
- Work with local government to change policies, as required, as they pertain to universal accessibility; and
- Work in support of related municipal objectives and strategic priorities.





# ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 3. MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION

### 3.1 Composition

The Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of nine (9) members, appointed by Council, from the general public.

#### 3.1.1 Public Members

##### **Public Members**

The Committee membership shall be a combination of persons with disabilities, seniors, service providers, and members of the general public. It is suggested that there be a cross-representation within these members including: members with disabilities; seniors; service providers familiar with accessibility issues; and members of the general public on the Committee at all times.

#### 3.1.2 Staff and Council Members (Ex-Officio Members)

##### **Staff Liaison**

A city staff member shall be appointed by the City Manager to serve as Staff Liaison, who along with other city staff may attend meetings of the Committee in a resource capacity.

##### **Legislative Services**

The Corporate Officer will appoint a Legislative support person to the Committee who will serve in an administrative support role.

##### **Council**

All members of Council are ex-officio members of the Committee and may attend meetings and participate in debate, but may not make motions and do not have voting rights.



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

## 3.1.3 Representation on Committees

On occasion, the Committee may be asked to appoint a representative of the Committee to sit on other Select and Advisory Committees of Council. This representative must be selected by a majority vote of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility.

### **Advisory Committee on Development Design**

The Committee shall select one (1) representative and one (1) alternate to serve on the Advisory Committee on Development Design. These appointments shall be decided at the inaugural meeting of each term.

### **Select Committee**

Select Committees may request a representative of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility to be appointed as a member of the Select Committee. This representative would act in this capacity for so long as is indicated by the Terms of Reference of the Select Committee or until the appointed member's term expires on the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, whichever comes first.

## 3.2 Length of Term

### **Public Members**

Council will consider applications and appoint the number of public members required up to a maximum of nine (9) total public members annually. All annual appointments will be for a term of up to two (2) years.

### **Additional Considerations:**

- Midterm Appointments: Appointments to the Committee to fill interim vacancies shall be for the unexpired portion of the current term involved and shall count towards the maximum length of service or number of terms on the Committee for the appointee.
- A committee member may not serve longer than six (6) consecutive years.



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

4. OTHER GOVERNANCE	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Review of Terms</b>
<p>Taking into account recommendations from the Committee, the Corporate Officer and Staff Liaison will review the <i>Advisory Committee Terms of Reference</i> documents annually. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the operations and function of each committee are still aligned with its defined purpose</p>	
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Eligibility and Selection</b>
<p>Eligibility and selection for membership on advisory committees will be accepted in accordance with the <i>City of Prince George Committees, Commissions and Boards Procedures Manual</i>.</p>	
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Decisions of the Committee</b>
<p>All acts and matters that come before the Committee must be done and decided by a majority of the members present at a duly constituted meeting with quorum present.</p>	
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<p>The Committee shall be responsible for the distribution or allocation of funding that may be available to the Committee and ensure that such allocation directly relates to the mandate of the Committee.</p>	
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Governance</b>
<p>In all unprovided cases, meetings and operations of the Committee shall be governed by the provisions of the <i>City of Prince George Committees, Commissions and Boards Policies and Procedures Manual</i>. In case of conflict between the provisions of these <i>Terms of Reference</i> and the <i>Procedures Manual</i>, the provisions of the <i>Procedures Manual</i> shall prevail.</p>	