



CITY OF VANCOUVER

OTHER REPORT

Report Date: October 4, 2005
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Meeting Date: October 20, 2005

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
FROM: Advisory Committee on Disability Issues
SUBJECT: Work Plan of Advisory Committee on Disability Issues - 2005

INFORMATION

THAT this report be received for information.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager submits this report for information.

PURPOSE

To provide Vancouver City Council with a report on the work plan for the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues.

BACKGROUND

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI) was established by Vancouver City Council on December 11, 2003. ACDI is a continuation of the Special Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (SACDI), which was established by Council on November 22, 1977.

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues is advisory to City Council. The mandate of the Committee is to work to enhance access to City services for persons with disabilities, and to identify and suggest solutions to gaps and barriers that impede their full participation in all aspects of City life.

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Committee

- advises on matters which affect persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
 - consulting with City staff during the design stage of planning to ensure that accessibility and the needs of people with disabilities are addressed in facilities design and renovation;
 - providing City staff with information on issues related to disabilities - e.g., taxi cabs, transportation;
 - providing input on disability issues for inclusion in Council reports - e.g., recent changes to building bylaw;
 - working collaboratively with staff on initiatives/projects to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities - e.g., upcoming initiative to make Vancouver the most Disability Friendly City possible;
 - advising on issues related to accessibility for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- contributes to City programs and policies to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered;
- views City programs and policies through a variety of lenses, including gender, racial origins, income levels, sexual orientation, age and levels of ability;
- works co-operatively with other civic agencies whose activities affect persons with disabilities;
- engages in outreach to the community of persons with disabilities to disseminate information and encourage participation;
- acts as a conduit for feedback from persons with disabilities on civic matters affecting them;
- acts as a resource for staff doing public involvement processes involving persons with disabilities;
- supports groups endeavouring to initiate and develop projects to assist persons with disabilities;
- attends City-sponsored public forums to provide information on City programs and receive public input on disability issues;
- produces an annual work plan with specific objectives by no later than March of each year, in consultation with its Council and staff liaisons, for distribution to Council and civic departments for information;
- submits an annual report to Council describing its accomplishments for the year, including reference to each objective set out in the work plan and any arising issues to which the Committee has responded.

DISCUSSION

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI) was created by Council in December 2003. Its members were appointed in 2004. The first task taken up by the new Committee was to set out a plan of action. This involved a thorough review of the history and actions of the preceding civic agency, the Special Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (SACDI), and a canvassing of inputs from ACDI members and other sources about potential areas of concern

and actions to be taken. This process proved to be time-consuming. By the time that the Committee devised its plan, enough of 2004 had passed that it was agreed by Committee members that the initial plan would serve for the balance of 2004 and for 2005.

ACDI determined that it wanted to, in particular, deal with six major categories if interest. Six sub-committees were therefore formed, composed of ACDI members and of other individuals from the general public or from City Staff. The six sub-committees were as follows:

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

Objective: To assemble and disseminate a body of objective statistical data which may be used to support proposals for the benefit of people with disabilities or required by the changing demographic profile of Vancouver.

Planned actions to be taken: On an on-going basis, to gather and assemble information on demographic trends and changes which currently affect or which are expected to effect concerns of people with disabilities.

B. EMPLOYMENT

Objectives:

1. To increase employment opportunities with the City of Vancouver for people with all kinds of disabilities.
2. To remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from accessing appropriate employment opportunities with the City of Vancouver.

Planned actions to be taken:

1. Meet with hiring supervisors City departments
2. In collaboration with City staff, identify some key barriers in the hiring process for people with disabilities and determine ways to remove these barriers.
3. In collaboration with City staff, develop a welcoming message that identifies the City's commitment to having a diverse workforce and that encourages people with disabilities to identify themselves early in the hiring process.
4. Liaise with Disability Agencies and City staff to develop better communication methods, sharing of information, more co-ordinated approach.
5. Work with staff in some key areas on targeted hiring for people with disabilities.
6. Prepare report on effectiveness of hiring initiatives.

C. HOUSING

Objectives:

1. To increase the availability of housing for people with disabilities.
2. To enhance the quality of present and future housing stock by advocating the principals of Universal Designs and other means.

Planned actions to be taken:

1. Liaise with City staff to present ACIDI comments and advice with regard to housing proposals.
2. Attend Council and other public meetings to set forth ACIDI comments and input.
3. Prepare a conception paper on inclusive design.

D. OUTREACH

Objective: To enhance the effectiveness of ACIDI by improving lines of communications and by forming alliances.

ACIDI attention was focused on the following groups.

1. City staff
2. Other civic agencies
3. City Council
4. Potential allies outside the City Government
5. The Public.

(Inherent in reaching out to all these groups was a concern for a general improvement in Communications.)

Planned actions to be taken: Outreach was regarded as an on-going and continuous function to be carried out in conjunction with other activities of ACIDI and as opportunities arose.

E. TRANSPORTATION

Objective: To review and where possible, enhance the transportation system of Vancouver for the benefit of people with disabilities.

Planned actions to be taken:

1. Join with Advisory Committee on Seniors to form a Joint Transportation Sub-Committee.
2. Liaise with City staff to present ACDI comments and advice with regard to transportation proposals.
3. Attend Council and other public meetings to set forth ACDI comments and input.

F. 2010 VISION FOR BC

Objective: To ensure that ACDI input in the form of commentary, initiatives and advice is incorporated into the planning for 2010 from the earliest possible moment and throughout the entire process.

Planned action to be taken: One or more ACDI representatives are to sit with City staff on the 2010 guiding team.

In 2005, the Committee expanded its planning to add a seventh sub-committee:

G. RECREATION

Objective: To increase accessibility to the parks and recreation facilities of Vancouver.

Planned action to be taken:

1. Work with City and Park Board officials and staff in order to offer ACDI input on proposed changes.
2. Establish a process to respond to the accessibility and universal design directions of the Park Board Strategic Plan and the Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project.

CONCLUSION

The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues submits the foregoing for Council's information.

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