



MEMORANDUM

July 17, 2018

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Communications Director
Kevin Quinlan, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Naveen Girm, Community Relations Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Chris Robertson
Assistant Director, City-Wide and Regional Planning

SUBJECT: Accessible Path of Travel Policy Review (RTS #10317)

This memorandum summarizes feedback from two recent meetings with the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, the Seniors' Advisory Committee, representatives of disability associations and disability and seniors' self-advocates held on June 26 and July 10, 2018 following referral of the Accessible Path of Travel Policy Review to Public Hearing on June 19, 2018. At both meetings, staff presented the recommendations in the Council report on the Accessible Path of Travel Policy Review and responded to questions.

As requested by Council, the following is a summary of the feedback received for information:

- *Requirement for 20% visitable townhouse/rowhouse units seen as too low. An accessible path of travel should be mandated for 100% of new dwelling units and relaxations based on site conditions should be considered on a case-by-case basis.*
 - A minimum 20% of townhouse/rowhouse units are proposed to be visitable as it has been demonstrated through a design study that this can be reasonably achieved on most sites. Requiring 100% of new low density dwelling units to provide an accessible path of travel would result in relaxation requests that add to processing times and contribute to delays in delivering new ground-oriented housing suitable for families with children.
 - *It is important to keep some of the accessible features in the upper levels of units where other adaptability requirements such as wider doors and corridors are proposed to be waived.*
 - The height requirements for outlets, switches & controls, kitchen hardware not requiring a tight grasp and reinforced tub walls for grab bars will continue to be required.

- *Question raised as to whether seasonal conditions (ie. winter vs summer) were considered in the policy work.*
 - The policy recommendations are applicable for all situations although snow clearing on public property is considered through separate City regulation.
- *Mandating an accessible path of travel for laneway homes using the rear lane is not acceptable due to the poor condition of many lanes in the City.*
 - The mandated exterior path of travel to laneway houses on sites 50 ft. or more can be provided from the street or from an on-site parking space. This would allow someone to be dropped off and access the laneway house through a no-step entry.
- *There are many basement suites in the city that are affordable and would serve as ideal accommodation for seniors and the disabled on subsidized incomes but they are not accessible.*
- *The main floor of all low density dwelling units should be fully accessible with a 3-piece washroom. A shower is necessary even when visiting so every new dwelling unit should have a shower on the ground level.*
- *City also needs to consider on- and off-site parking needs along with visitable/accessible units.*
- *The City needs to reconsider its policies regarding allowing only commercial uses on the ground floor in zones permitting mixed-use. In certain cases, it may be preferable for most of the ground floor to have a commercial use along with one or more accessible dwelling units.*
- *Concerns expressed that waiving the adaptability requirements on the upper levels of certain dwelling units will not allow people to age in place or accommodate future disabilities.*
 - Generally, the width of stairs and corridors will be waived on the upper levels to support livability. The height requirements for outlets, switches and controls, kitchen hardware not requiring a tight grasp and backing in tub walls will continue to be required.
- *A need for standardized accessible housing designs that can be offered as examples to applicants was expressed.*
 - *The City relies on developers and builders to provide their own accessible housing designs.*
- Information/clarification was requested on the following:
 - *whether plumbing or accessibility requirements take precedence in determining a relaxation.*
 - Staff confirmed that precedence is based on life safety factors.

- *percentage of building permit applications that have received exemptions for accessibility requirements.*
 - City does not keep a record of this but staff propose that the recording of this information could be incorporated into future implementation/monitoring.
- *Occurrence of post-occupancy checks by seniors/persons with disabilities of dwelling units built in compliance with the VBBL adaptability requirements.*
 - City does not use seniors/persons with disabilities in post-occupancy checks of adaptable units, but this could be incorporated on a trial basis in future implementation/monitoring.
- *Provide existing number of visitable/accessible units in City and demand for such units in the future.*
 - City does not keep a record of this but staff propose that the recording of this information could be incorporated into future implementation/monitoring.
- *Concern expressed that not all new apartment/condo buildings meet VBBL adaptability requirements. Request was made for staff to provide a break-down of the number of apartment buildings at 3 storeys or less and 4 or more storeys.*
 - City does not presently keep a record of this but staff propose that the recording of this information should be incorporated into future implementation/monitoring.
- *Required dimension of exterior path should accommodate motorized and manual wheelchairs.*
 - Width is 32" and could accommodate both a motorized or manual wheelchair.

This memo summarizes recent feedback from the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, the Seniors' Advisory Committee, representatives of disability associations and disability and seniors' self-advocates regarding the Accessible Path of Travel Policy Review for the information of Council.



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