



Report Date: September 22, 2023
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TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services
SUBJECT: Accessibility Committee: Designation and Remuneration

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council designate the Accessibility Committee as a Type C Civic Agency, in accordance with the Accessible British Columbia Act.
- B. THAT Council approve the proposed compensation for Accessibility Committee members in accordance with the revised Terms of Reference found in Appendix A, similar to the remuneration structure for the Board of Variance.

Purpose and Executive Summary

Following the Council Memo (July 20th, Remuneration Protocols of Accessibility Committees regulated by the Accessible British Columbia Act), this report further recommends Council designate the Accessibility Committee as a Type C, rather than a Type D Civic Agency. This report also recommends a compensation structure for Accessibility Committee members. Committee members will be appointed by Council separately.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

On July 19, 2022, Council [approved](#) the Accessibility Strategy – Phase 1 (RTS 14734).

On November 15, 2022, Council [approved](#) the motion “Accessibility Audit of all City-Owned Assets”.

On April 25, 2023, Council [approved](#) the Terms of Reference for the Accessibility Committee and implementing the Accessibility Committee, as regulated by the Accessible British Columbia Act (RTS 15599).

City Manager’s Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The Accessible British Columbia Act (the “Accessible BC Act”) was passed in 2021 and sets out requirements for prescribed organizations including municipalities. In alignment with the implementation of the City’s Accessibility Strategy, staff have been working on measures to ensure the City is in compliance with the Accessible BC Act.

Compliance with Provincial Regulation

The Act requires that all prescribed organizations create:

- a) An accessibility plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization
- b) An accessibility committee to assist the organization in identifying barriers and advise the organization on how to remove and prevent barriers
- c) A public feedback mechanism for receiving comments from the public on the plan and barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization

Discussion

Upon establishment, the City’s provincially mandated Accessibility Committee will replace the existing Accessibility Strategy Task Force.

Designation of the Accessibility Committee

Staff recommend that the Accessibility Committee be designated as a Type C Civic Agency, rather than a Type D Civic Agency. Type C Civic Agencies are established through by-laws or other legislation, such as the Accessible BC Act.

As a Type C Civic Agency, the Accessibility Committee will be able to make recommendations on matters related to the Accessibility Strategy as described in the Terms of Reference (Appendix A) and as related to its role in the Accessible BC Act. Recommendations can be made to the Mayor and Council or staff.

Proposed Compensation for the City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Committee

Following the [April 25 Council Report](#), Council directed staff to review the remuneration protocols of other accessibility committees governed by the Accessible BC Act, with a goal to ensure that the Committee members are compensated appropriately for their service.

Review of Peer Organizations

Staff conducted a scan of accessibility committees at 15 peer municipalities, districts, and public sector organizations in British Columbia. The scan showed that most municipalities are using and adapting their existing Council-appointed advisory committees to fulfill the mandated Provincial legislation requirement. As such, the majority of municipal committees are not paid. There is an exception of one municipality, which is providing honoraria at a living wage for Accessibility Committee members.

Most public sector organizations, such as universities and Crown corporations, are providing small stipends or honoraria for Accessibility Committee members. While rates are continuing to be determined on an organization-by-organization basis, the scan showed that compensation can range from \$100.00 - \$300.00 per meeting.

Recommended Approach for Compensating City of Vancouver Accessibility Committee Members

As a committee mandated by Provincial legislation, staff recommend aligning the compensation protocol of the Accessibility Committee with the City of Vancouver's existing approach to compensating another provincially mandated committee, the Board of Variance (BOV). BOV members currently receive \$125.00 per meeting for their two-year term, and the Board Chair receives \$175.00. Providing the same level of compensation to Accessibility Committee members will help ensure consistency.

It is further suggested that the City's Accessibility Committee members be offered an opt-in approach for compensation, to ensure the remuneration does not create challenges or barriers to people who receive Provincial income assistance. Members will be able to request a compensation amount of up to \$125.00 per meeting that works for their income level. In addition, all meeting expenses will be covered.

Progress towards the Establishment of the Accessibility Committee

Recruitment efforts to identify community members to join the City's Accessibility Committee are currently underway. The City launched an open call for applications at the beginning of August 2023. Applications were available through multiple mediums, including on-line, via postal mail or by calling 311, in an effort to make the process low-barrier and accessible. Recruitment information was broadcast widely across the city to community members and was shared with participants who had attended engagement sessions for the development for the Accessibility Strategy (Phase 1 & 2).

Appointment of Members of the Accessibility Committee

While Council will be designating the Advisory Committee if it adopted the Recommendations in this report, Council will appoint the members through a separate process.

After careful consideration of all applications, a selection committee will recommend 11 community members with lived experiences of disability to Council to be appointed to the Accessibility Committee.

Staff representatives from Real Estate, Environment and Facilities Management, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, Human Resources, Engineering, and the Civic Engagement and Communication team have been appointed by their respective General Managers. The appointment of City staff to the committee is to ensure accountability, direct feedback, and communication.

Changes were made to the adopted Terms of Reference ([approved on April 25, 2023](#)) to reflect the new designation of the Accessibility Committee and the remuneration of community members appointed to the committee (Appendix A). City staff are not eligible for remuneration.

Financial Implications

Council approved \$300,000 in the 2023 Operating Budget to support the administration of the Accessibility Strategy, including the creation of the Accessibility Committee. Within this amount, \$25,000 has been allocated for committee meeting expenses including honorarium requirements for members of the Accessibility Committee.

Legal Implications

Designation of the Accessibility Committee and providing for compensation complies with the Accessible BC Act.

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APPENDIX A
ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE
UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE
 (Original approved by Council on April 25th, 2023)

Objective	The purpose of the Committee is to support the City of Vancouver in identifying barriers to accessibility and provide the City with advice on how to prevent and remove those barriers.
Mandate	The City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Committee (‘the Committee’) is established pursuant to section 10 of the Accessible British Columbia Act (‘the Act’). The Committee must act in accordance with the Act and any applicable Regulations.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance and advice on the development of the City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Strategy and its renewal; • Help with the development of a public feedback mechanism to identify accessibility barriers, in relation to the Accessibility Strategy, and provide advice to the City on how to remove or prevent barriers; • Embed an accessibility lens on matters such as policy, by-laws and planning decisions and encourage other City departments to apply this lens; • Review and provide feedback on 3-year Accessibility Strategy departmental action plans; and • Review and provide feedback on Accessibility Strategy annual progress reports by departments, including monitoring progress and timelines, and providing recommendations on priorities.
Committee Membership	<p>There will be a total of 16 committee members. The Committee will be comprised of a mix of eleven (11) community members with lived experience to be appointed by City Council, and five (5) non-voting City staff to allow for public accountability, and direct communication and feedback.</p> <p>Public membership to the Committee (11) is limited to people with lived experience of disability, and representatives from organizations who provide services to, or support, people with lived experience of disability. The majority of the Committee’s public membership will be comprised of people with lived experience. There will be at least two (2) people from Indigenous communities, and at least two (2) youths with disabilities on the committee. There will be a representative from the Persons with Disability Advisory Committee and the Older Persons and Elders Advisory Committee.</p> <p>The public membership will be selected through a low-barrier, open application process.</p> <p>Due to the limited space, it is acknowledged that the committee will not be representative of the full spectrum of disabilities. Those with experiences of disability that intersect with historically underserved and inequitably treated groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, racialized people, 2SLGBTQ+ people, seniors and youth, will be prioritized.</p>

	<p>Members are expected to represent and advocate for themselves as well as the wider disability communities to the greatest extent possible. Members must be based in, or serve, communities in Vancouver.</p> <p>City staff representing different departments will be appointed to the Committee by General Managers to serve as non-voting members. Representation of departments will be determined by the pertinence of their role in implementing the Accessibility Strategy.</p>
<p>Code of Conduct</p>	<p>All members of the committee (voting and non-voting) are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to operate in accordance with the Terms of Reference. • Maintain and respect the confidentiality of all committee members. This includes meetings, correspondence, email, among others. • At all times, treat each other with respect and courtesy. • Respect the opinions of everyone– agree to disagree. • Commit to the principle of building on and leveraging existing community assets, capacities and networks, and participate fully in designing operating agreements at the first meeting. • Ensure the Accessibility Committee is a safe space of mutual respect and transparency to discuss issues and solutions; work constructively and collaboratively with all members. • Perform their roles and responsibilities to the best of their ability. • Maintain open communication about the work of the Accessibility Committee. <p>In the event that a member of the Accessibility Committee does not comply with the Code of Conduct as set out above, the member may be asked to leave.</p>
<p>Meetings</p>	<p>The Accessibility Committee will meet six (6) times per year. Additional meeting(s) may be convened as needed, and smaller working groups to assist with the work may also be formed. Meeting minutes and materials will be distributed prior to each meeting.</p> <p>All committee members will participate in as many meetings as possible during their term. It is anticipated that each meeting will be approximately 2 hours in length. Meetings may be held in person, virtually, or in a hybrid model.</p> <p>Members (voting and non-voting) may not send substitutes to meetings. If a member misses two consecutive meetings, the Committee's support staff will reach out to inquire about their absences.</p>
<p>Terms</p>	<p>Committee members are committed to a two (2) year term with the option of renewing their term for another two (2) years only. Terms will be staggered to ensure continuity in the work of accessibility within the City.</p>
<p>Voting</p>	<p>Should there be a recommendation that needs to be made, Committee members representing the public will have voting privileges. Staff will be non-voting members.</p> <p>For any recommendations to be made, the preferred model for decision-making is consensus between the committee members. However, if consensus cannot be achieved, then the Chief Equity Officer may</p>

	exercise the deciding vote. Ultimately, the responsibility of this committee falls under the City, aligning with the BC Accessibility Legislation.
Accessible Participation	<p>The City will ensure that all members can fully participate in the Committee.</p> <p>Funding will be provided for voting members who have specific access needs, including support or reimbursements for transportation, interpreters, technical equipment, or other resources deemed necessary for full participation.</p>
Honoraria	<p>Remuneration is available for voting members of the Committee who request financial support. Members will receive an honorarium (cheque) of \$125.00 per meeting.</p> <p>Each member will be offered an opt-in approach for compensation, to make the committee accessible to people who receive Provincial income assistance. Members will be able to request a compensation amount of up to \$125.00 per meeting that works for their income level, while being appropriately compensated for their service on the committee.</p> <p>In addition, all meeting expenses will be covered.</p>
Staff Support	<p>The Accessibility Planner will convene the Accessibility Committee and coordinate the logistics of the meetings.</p> <p>This may include: identifying meeting times and dates, taking minutes, booking appropriate meeting spaces as needed, facilitating technology solutions, and other forms of accommodation, to allow for full participation by members, and attending to any other administrative tasks to ensure the smooth running of the Committee.</p>
Reporting to	As a Type C Civic Agency, the Committee reports to Council. Committee reports and recommendations directed to Council are conveyed via the Chief Equity Officer and/or General Manager, Arts, Culture, and Community Services.