

# COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

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**DATE:** January 27, 2020

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

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

**SUBJECT:** Advisory Committee on Accessibility Annual Report 2019

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2019 Work Plan  
Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2020 Work Plan  
Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee on Accessibility

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Council:

1. APPROVES the Advisory Committee on Accessibility 2020 Work Plan attached to the report dated January 27, 2020 from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility; and,
2. RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated January 27, 2020 from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility titled "Advisory Committee on Accessibility Annual Report 2019."

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to review and reflect on the achievements and projects that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility completed through 2019. Additionally, attached to this report is the 2020 Work Plan, which provides an overview of the work that the Advisory Committee on Accessibility plan to undertake throughout 2020.

## 2019 ACHIEVEMENTS:

### Transportation

In previous years, the Committee developed a database of barriers within the sidewalk and pedestrian network. The Committee continues to make this database available to the Public Works department to inform the prioritization of annual sidewalk improvements. Additionally, proposed sidewalk improvements for 2019 were presented to the Committee for comment and recommendations.

Committee members regularly draw attention to new barriers through the Staff Liaisons and the City's Report a Problem tool.

In 2018, a concern was brought to the Committee from a member of the public regarding challenges with accessible parking within the Downtown. The Committee engaged in discussions with Administration in

2019. The Committee was pleased to see that Administration made changes to the Parking Bylaw in 2019 to better accommodate access to accessible parking in the downtown core.

### **New Development**

The Committee has a representative on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design (ACDD). The representative attends ACDD meetings to make recommendations for enhancing the accessibility of new commercial, multi-family and industrial developments.

### **Civic Facilities**

Feedback on City Projects including the Pool and Fire Hall were solicited by both the City and the design firms involved in these projects. It was clear and exciting that the Accessibility lens was being applied to all aspects of these projects and feedback from the Committee was welcomed and implemented where possible.

The Committee continues to provide feedback and recommendations to Civic Facilities regarding regular improvements and maintenance from the annual budget set aside for accessibility improvements.

### **Age-Friendly Plan**

In addition to being a continued resource for Administration in the implementation of various action items from the Plan, the Committee is tasked with aiding in the development of Age and Ability-Friendly service training for front-line staff. In 2018, the Committee determined that their expertise would be better suited to evaluating and recommending existing training programs for Administration to adopt. In 2019, the Committee selected a training program and will make a recommend to Administration in 2020 that Front-Line staff receive this training.

### **2020 WORK PLAN:**

Attached to this report is a copy of the proposed 2020 Work Plan. Much of the work of the Committee is ongoing in nature; as such, the 2020 work plan consists largely of a continuation of past activities. The Accessibility Committee has made some proposed changes to the 2020 work plan in order to specifically target some areas of potential improvement including outreach and awareness in the community and our continued use as a resource for the many City departments.

The Committee is pleased to report that the consultation on development of City owned buildings has been amazing this year. We feel that this process has been improving steadily over the years, culminating last year with the Committee's opportunity to provide early input on two large City projects.

We do feel further opportunities exist for the Committee to have the ability to provide more input on proposed policy and bylaw changes going forward.

### **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.*

## **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. These last few years have seen the Committee continue to form relationships with different departments within the City and be given the opportunity to have significant input into City project planning and development. This last year in particular the Committee is pleased to report that we had opportunity to provide input during the very early stages of both the new Pool and Fire Hall projects. This process has been particularly rewarding on the new pool project as the Committee had the opportunity to provide input throughout all stages of the planning and design of this project. Even more exciting is that this input resulted in multiple Committee recommendations being implemented in the most recent plans. This type of consultation driven by the City and followed through on by the design firm is exciting for the future of accessibility in public buildings going forward. The Committee also continued to be involved and informed in year-to-year improvements and maintenance to the sidewalk and trail pedestrian networks.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility is able to provide input on private development through its representation on the Advisory Committee on Development and Design. Feedback is provided on Universal Design principals and our representative ensures that accessibility is being considered during this development and design process.

Recently, the Advisory Committee on Accessibility was also asked to provide a representative on the newly formed Select Committee on Poverty Reduction. This shows the City's continued focus on reducing barriers for all citizens.

The Committee looks forward to continuing its work of removing barriers for all citizens in the City of Prince George. A big thank you to Council for their leadership and obvious focus on improving accessibility in our community as we continue to strive towards the shared goal of an inclusive, equitable and barrier free Prince George.

## **RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Chris Gobbi, Chair,  
City of Prince George Advisory Committee on Accessibility

## **APPROVED:**

Kathleen Soltis, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2020/03/09