

North Shore Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 27, 2025 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Hybrid (In-Person and Virtual via MS Teams)

Present

General Members

- Margarete Wiedmann, DNV
- Sam Douglas, DNV
- Farinaz Havaei, CNV
- Lucy Prichard-Mandl, CNV
- Mehdi Mirzaee, CNV
- James Hanley, DWV

Presenters

- Jaimie Brown, Centralized Recreation Services Manager
- Vida Sandoughdar, Leisure Access Counsellor
- Helen Murphy, Access and Inclusion Programmer

Guests

- Trish Kelly, Consultant, Untapped Accessibility

Staff Liaisons

- Maria de Fatima Lazo, Staff Liaison, DNV
- Jill Tapp, Staff Liaison, CNV
- Magda Trespalacios, Staff Liaison, CNV
- Riley McLeod, Staff Liaison, DWV
- Mary Jukich, Committee Clerk, DNV

Council Liaisons

- Cllr. Shervin Shahriari, CNV

Regrets:

- Carole Hawthorne
- Jessica Neville
- Biljana Kuzamnouska
- Cllr. Catherine Pope, DNV
- Cllr. Christine Cassidy, DWV

1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

The chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and provided the land acknowledgement.

2. Accessibility Features and Meeting Agreements

An overview was presented of the accessibility features and meeting agreements as follows:

- Agenda and slide deck shared in advance of meeting.
- Close captioning provided.
- 10-minute break.
- Attachments clearly named so that revised or updated versions are apparent in the file name.
- All meeting attendees are asked to identify themselves before speaking.
- All meeting attendees are asked to speak slowly to support accurate captions and general comprehension.

Committee members were also invited to reach out to the committee clerk if there was anything further that would support members.

A brief overview was also provided of the community agreements. This is a practice to set the foundation of how to engage to ensure there are positive and respectful conversations. Some of the key highlights were as follows:

- Listen with curiosity & compassion
- Be patient, practice taking a pause
- Hold space for multiple truths
- Take space, make space
- Lean into discomfort
- Respect personal experiences

3. Adoption of Agenda

Margarete Wiedmann moved and Farinaz Havaei seconded:
That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Adoption of the October 30, 2025 Minutes

Margarete Wiedmann moved and Mehdi Mirzaee seconded:
That the minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

5. Accessibility Features and Meeting Agreements

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6. Adoption of Agenda

Margarete Wiedmann moved and Farinaz Havaei seconded:
That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

7. Adoption of the October 30, 2025 Minutes

Margarete Wiedmann moved and Mehdi Mirzaee seconded:
That the minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

8. North Vancouver Recreation Commission Accessibility Progress Updates

Representatives from the North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission (NVRC) provided a report on the accessibility initiatives from 2024 and 2025. These updates focused on the goals and the implementation actions of the District of North Vancouver's Accessibility Plan, which NVRC subscribes to. NVRC provides recreation, sport, arts and culture programming and operates 10 community recreation centres, the North Vancouver Tennis Centre and Centennial Theatre. The following updates

were provided and organized according to the relevant goal and action of the Accessibility Plan:

Goal 1 - Address attitudinal barriers towards people with visible and invisible disabilities

- Action 1.1 – Provide ongoing training to all staff and council on ableism, accessibility & disability
 - Anti-ableism training for people leaders
 - De-escalation training for front line staff & supervisors
 - Instructor training on supporting accessibility in NVRC programs
 - Inclusive language added to onboarding & ongoing staff training
 - Inclusion training for summer camp staff
- Action 1.3 – Strengthen relationships with the NS ACDI and other disability serving organizations to understand community needs & provide support
 - Aquatics & inclusion staff met with community members with disabilities & parents of children with disabilities
 - Enhance staff understanding of needs
 - Feedback to be incorporated into aquatics services strategy

Goal 4 - Create inclusive & diverse employment opportunities for people with disabilities

- Action 4.3 – Establish a framework to support disability work experience & placement programs between the District & external partners
 - Fitness centre work experience placements
 - Harry Jerome
 - Delbrook, Parkgate & Karen Magnussen (CapU student)
 - Upcoming Windsor Secondary student placements

Goal 5 - Improve the physical accessibility of public infrastructure and spaces within our community.

- Action 5.1 – Incorporate accessibility as a key consideration in infrastructure planning & design
- Action 5.10 – Ensure all public-facing indoor spaces provide accessible options for interaction
 - Wayfinding update at Ron Andrews (complete) & Karen Magnussen (in progress)
 - 3 wave-activated automatic doors installed at Karen Magnussen

Goal 6 - Monitor and evaluate the plan to allow for improvement and adjustment as needed

- Action 6.5 – Conduct a community needs assessment at District Libraries & Recreational/Culture spaces
 - Request for proposals (RPF) issued for accessibility audit of NVRC facilities
 - Internal review of facility accessibility features in progress
 - Update accessibility features listing
 - Inform upcoming audit

Financial assistance program changes

- Simplified process (application, approval, access to funds)
- Approved funds can now be used for any eligible programs
- Flexible for participants and efficient for staff

Aquatics

- Low sensory swims
- Shift from adaptive to integrated model for swim lessons for adults
- Two successful placements this year

Summer camp inclusion

- Growing need for support
- Four additional inclusion support staff in 2025
- New staff committee focusing on training, barrier mitigation & procedure development

Accessible Programming

- LGBTQIAS+ swim session and steam room session offered at Karen Magnussen pool in the after hours
- NVRC engaged a consultant to assess the accessibility of the washrooms and change rooms and are working on a report with recommendations
- Women's only programs at Ron Andrews Pool when the facility is closed to the public
- The youth services team is informed by a youth leadership committee to work together to design and implement programs for youth such as trivia night.

On completion of the presentation, the following feedback was provided by the committee members:

- Entrances to some of the community centres are not accessible specifically the pathway from the parking area to the facility at Ron Andrews has tree roots and pose a tripping hazard. At Parkgate, the curb cuts from the parking area to the entrance are short and steep.
- In some facilities, the seats in the waiting areas are too low and some people may be recovering from surgery and require higher and wider seating.
- Clarification was requested around the training offered to individuals in leadership roles on anti-ableism and not offered to everyone particularly as staff are interacting with facility users and may benefit from the training. The NVRC representative indicated that the initial training was limited and was being tested before expanding the training to the broader staff. Further information was provided that there are two actions on training and education and one was to encompass training for senior management positions and Council and the second

was to capture external facing positions i.e. customer service, and staff that interact with the public.

- Regarding the accessibility assessment of the washrooms and change rooms whether there was value in speaking to the actual users with living experience. The NVRC representative indicated that as focus is on service delivery, meetings took place with community members with living experience.
- Previously, the therapy pool at Delbrook was often overcrowded and whether there was consideration to schedule dedicated times for use by people with disabilities. The NVRC representative responded that the purpose of the pool is for different uses, social, therapeutic, classes, etc. and one of the plans for 2026 is the opening of the Harry Jerome facility which will open opportunities to dedicate other schedules and this feedback will be taken back to staff.
- A request was presented that data be provided in the presentation to assist with yearly comparisons.

Mehdi Mirzaee moved and Farinaz Havaei seconded:

That the North Vancouver Recreation Commission
Accessibility Progress Updates be received for information.

CARRIED

9. Check-in and Break

Committee members took a break from 6:30 – 6:40 pm.

10. SPARC BC Local Community Accessibility Grant

The local community disability grant is funded by the provincial government and administered by the Social Planning and Research Council of B.C. (SPARC BC). The funding available is in the amount of up to \$25,000 to help remove barriers for people with disabilities. The purpose of the grant is to support projects identified in municipal governments' Accessibility Plans, by their Accessibility Committee, or through community feedback. The grant will be used to undertake an accessibility audit of the Municipal Hall which would include:

- Public access areas: front desk, washrooms, Council chambers, etc.

This proposal directly supports Goal #5: improve the physical accessibility of public infrastructure and spaces within our community

- Ensure all public-facing indoor spaces (such as service counters) provide accessible options for interaction.

Public feedback has also indicated that the main-door entrance, lobby chairs and front desk, etc. may not be accessible. This is part of a broader project, the Hall Renewal project, which is comprised of space planning and includes replacement of HVAC, building controls, fire alarms and other safety upgrades.

Accordingly, the committee was requested to provide their support for staff to apply for the Local Community Accessibility Grant Program and conduct an accessibility audit at the Municipal Hall.

On discussion, the following comments were provided by committee members:

- Clarification was requested on how the prioritization of projects will be undertaken. Staff indicated a firm has already been engaged to undertake some preliminary studies and they have identified some items; however, the main purpose of the SPARC funding would be for an accessibility audit that deals with identification and providing a report for addressing barriers. In addition, it may be beneficial to consult with the committee in terms of providing feedback around prioritizing the projects.
- Consideration be given to also review the exterior at the municipal hall particularly the slope from the parking lot to the entrance of the building, as well as consideration to have higher and wider seats in the lobby areas as well as Council chambers.

Farinaz Havaei moved and Margarete Wiedmann seconded:

That the North Shore Accessibility Advisory Committee supports the District of North Vancouver's application to the Local Community Accessibility Grant, administered by SPARC BC, with the objective of advancing the District's Accessibility Plan. The Committee further endorses the use of grant funds to conduct an accessibility audit of the public access areas of the District's Municipal Hall at 355 West Queens Road, in order to identify and address barriers to accessibility.

CARRIED

11. NS Accessibility Advisory Committee Year in Review

Staff discussed that as part of standard processes at the end of each year, staff liaisons report on committee activities for each year and future workplans to their respective Councils. This information is first reviewed by the Committee to ensure accuracy and collect any comments or feedback. Staff provided a summary of the committee's year in review as follows:

- A new committee was created following the Terms of Reference approved by all three municipal Councils in November 2024.
- Committee members participated on an orientation regarding:
 - Roles, general procedures, and expectations
 - Governance procedures under Robert's Rules and Terms of Reference
- Feedback was provided by committee members on the following projects, initiatives and reports:
 - North Shore Emergency Management (NSEM)'s accessible emergency management procedures
 - CNV's Accessibility Plan
 - CNV's Curb Access and Parking Plan
 - CNV's Local Communities Accessibility Grant Application
 - DWV's National AccessAbility Week
 - DWV's "Year in Review" presentation
 - DNV's "Year in Review" presentation
 - DNV's Local Communities Accessibility Grant Application

- North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission (NVRC)'s 2024-2025 Accessibility Progress Updates

Farinaz Havaei moved and Margarete Wiedmann seconded:

That the NS Accessibility Advisory Committee Year in Review presentation be received for information.

CARRIED

12.2026 Workplan and Meeting Schedule

Staff reported that as 2025 concludes, preparations for the 2026 workplan have begun. The three municipalities are currently finalizing their internal workplans. Similar to last year, each staff liaison will bring forward information on potential projects that are expected to come to the committee throughout 2026, with an initial overview provided during the first meetings of the year.

Staff presented the preliminary items under consideration for the 2026 workplan. The following areas were identified:

- Ongoing updates and monitoring of municipal Accessibility Plans, including incorporation of public feedback received.
- Review of projects and initiatives referred to the committee that support the implementation of the Accessibility Plans.
- Progress updates from each municipality on the implementation of their respective Accessibility Plans.
- Education and awareness activities for National AccessAbility Week, scheduled for May 24–30, 2026.

Staff noted that the 2026 meeting schedule will follow the same structure as the current year. Each regular meeting will include two slots for municipalities to bring forward items, as well as a dedicated time slot for committee members to raise topics for group discussion. Committee members were encouraged to make use of this discussion space to bring over topics important to them.

During the discussion, it was suggested that an electronic survey be distributed to the committee members for ideas/topics that could be brought to the committee for discussion. Staff will work with the Chair and Vice Chair to move this initiative forward

During a broader discussion, it was also suggested that committee members each month be requested to indicate whether they were attending the meeting in person or online.

Committee members were also presented with the proposed 2026 meeting schedule as follows:

Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Schedule (Last Thursday of the month):

- January 29th
- March 26th
- May 28th
- July 30th
- September 24th
- November 26th

Special Meeting Schedule (Scheduled only if necessary):

- February
- April
- June
- August
- October

Sam Douglas moved and Farinaz Havaei seconded:

That the 2026 workplan and meeting schedule be adopted.

CARRIED

13. Emerging Issues

No emerging issues were presented.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Next Meeting:

- Meeting – Thursday, January 29, 2026
District of North Vancouver Municipal Hall