

# **North Shore Accessibility Advisory Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, April 30, 2026 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Hybrid (In-Person and Virtual via MS Teams)

### **Accessibility Features for the Meeting**

- Closed captioning is provided.
- Meeting materials shared 1 week in advance in an accessible format.

### **Present:**

#### **General Members**

- Margarete Wiedmann, DNV
- Sam Douglas, DNV
- James Hanley, DWV (Chair)
- Anne Labelle, DWV

#### **Presenters**

- Deb Hutchison-Koep, Chief Librarian North Vancouver City Library
- Leanna Wright, Manager, Administrative Services, North Vancouver City Library
- Alysa Garza, Administrative Services Coordinator, North Vancouver City Library
- Tanja Oswald, Community Planner, DNV
- Natalie Chiang, DNV
- Chandra Lesmeister, Section Manager Environment and Parks Planning, CNV
- Sahar Khelifa, Planning Assistant Infrastructure, Transportation and Parks, CNV

#### **Councillors**

- Cllr. Shervin Shahriari, CNV

#### **Staff Liaisons**

- Maria de Fatima Lazo, Staff Liaison, DNV
- Clare Averiss, Director, CNV
- Jill Tapp, Staff Liaison, CNV
- Magda Trespalacios, Staff Liaison, CNV
- Mary Jukich, Committee Clerk, DNV

## **Regrets**

- Jessica Neville
- Carole Hawthorne
- Biljana Kuzamnouska
- Mehdi Mirzaee, CNV
- Farinaz Havaei, CNV
- Lucy Prichard-Mandl, CNV
- Mehdi Mirzaee, CNV
- Riley McLeod, Staff Liaison, DWV
- Cllr. Catherine Pope, DNV
- Cllr. Christine Cassidy, DWV

### **1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement**

The chair called the meeting to order at 5:38 pm and provided a land acknowledgement.

The Chair was informed that quorum was not reached.

### **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

At this point in the proceedings, the committee lost quorum. All resolutions will be ratified at the next NSAAC meeting.

### 3. Adoption of Agenda

*Moved by Sam Douglas and seconded by Anne Labelle:*  
To adopt the agenda.

**CARRIED**

### 4. Adoption of the March 26, 2026 Minutes

*Moved by Marguerite Wiedmann and seconded by Sam Douglas:*  
To adopt the minutes.

**CARRIED**

### 5. North Vancouver City Library Accessibility Plan

Deb Hutchison-Koep, Chief Librarian North Vancouver City Library provided a presentation on the North Vancouver City Library Accessibility Plan. Some of the key highlights were as follows:

- The Accessibility Plan is endorsed by the North Vancouver City Library Board
  - Goals:
    - Meaningful connections
    - Spaces and services
    - Amplify representation
    - Embed accessibility
- The Accessibility Plan is a “living” document

#### Creation of the Accessibility Plan

- Worked with Untapped Accessibility
- Rooted in existing plans and priorities, and ensures disability inclusion and accessibility are consistent and explicit in our activities
- Outlines a structured, ongoing process of monitoring, evaluation and future planning

#### Work to Date:

- Endorse the Plan – Done
- Publish the Plan – Done
- Communicate and socialize the Plan with Library staff – Done
- Initiate tracking of accessibility input and feedback – Done
- Share the Plan with the NSAAC
- Develop template for annual progress
- Establish an internal working group
  - Group of up to 8 individuals who meet quarterly to:
    - Review feedback received and support prioritization of actions
    - Lead and support the work, as appropriate

- Advise and provide feedback on training for staff
  - Produce internal communications on topics related to accessibility and inclusion
  - Combination of individuals with technical expertise and lived experience
- Established Services and Practices as follows:
- Regular home delivery service
  - Accessible formats, including:
    - Audio books (physical and digital)
    - DAISY readers and compatible audiobooks
    - Large print
    - NNELS and CELA collections
  - Hearing loop in main meeting room
  - Assistive technology for public computers
  - Inclusive hiring practices
  - Website accessibility, with ability to adjust settings

#### Recent Accessibility Initiatives

- Sensory Sundays (quiet hour, sensory supportive room)
- “Cozy storytimes” with reduced sensory stimulation
- Reduced-stimulation Summer Reading Club celebration
- Sign language storytimes
- Added ASL module to online Mango Languages learning resource
- Height-adjustable staff desks
- Height-adjustable self-service checkout machines

#### Planned Accessibility Initiatives

- Signage and wayfinding improvements
- Launch internal working group to support accessibility plan implementation
- Accessibility checklist for programs
- Baseline accessibility training for staff
- Website review and updates

#### Proposed annual engagement with NSAAC to:

- Share progress updates
- Share what we have heard and learned over the year
- Outline planned work for the coming year
- Receive your advice and feedback on planned work

On completion of the presentation the following comments were provided by committee members:

- There are accessible stalls in the bathroom that include grab bars and a clean flat surface for supplies and also ensure the stalls have enough space for different size wheelchairs. In addition, there should be signs to encourage people not to use the accessible stalls so that those stalls are free for the people who require them. The presenter indicated that the washrooms are built to meet the code at the time the building opened in 2008 and there is further work to be done in this regard.

- In terms of the website there should be the telephone number for the accessible librarian and that under parking, it does not state there is accessible spots and that there is free parking with the SPARC sign.
- It would be beneficial to have additional hybrid programs for people who have difficulties coming into the library.

## **6. DNV Ageing and Older Persons Strategy**

Tanja Oswald, Community Planner, provided a presentation on the DNV Ageing and Older Persons Strategy. Some key events that have advanced the work of the strategy were as follows:

- Assembly of North Shore Leaders on Seniors' Health (April 3, 2025)
- District Council meeting and staff direction (November 3, 2025)
- District Council meeting and approval of scope (March 2, 2026)

Strategic directions which emerged through the early scoping process and will help to guide the rest of the strategy's development. These directions are aligned with BC's 8 age friendly community features and touch on aspects such as

- Community Life & Social Wellbeing
  - Captures priorities such as improving gathering spaces, creating new opportunities for people to connect, expanding access to volunteering arts, culture and recreational activities, employment opportunities
- Connected Care & Supports
  - This direction is about making services easier to find and navigate, improving how they are working together
- Mobility, Safety & Access
  - This direction is about improving sidewalks, crossings and overall pedestrian safety and working with Transit providers to improve options.
- Housing Stability & Aging in Place
  - This direction focusses on increasing affordable and appropriate housing options, supporting accessible and adaptable housing design.

On completion of the presentation, the following comments were provided by committee members:

- How can supportive accessible affordable housing be achieved given the cost of housing. The presenter indicated that there are accessibility guidelines that are brought forward through development applications for consideration in the design and building of housing.

- Whether some policy or guidelines could be implemented for cooperative housing costs to allow some cost reduction and provide housing that is below market rate to accommodate vulnerable populations.
- A suggestion was presented for more accessible public washrooms around the District and more broadly on the North Shore.

## **7. Check-in and Break**

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

## **8. CNV Parks and Public Space Plan**

Chandra Lesmeister, Section Manager Environment and Parks Planning provided a presentation on the CNV Parks and Public Space Plan. The project started in Fall 2025 and work consisted of collecting data, mapping and analyzing the data to provide a foundation to understand the current state of the parks and public space system. The second phase of the project will consist of public engagement and the feedback collected will inform the vision and development of the Plan. It is anticipated that the final Plan will be delivered to Council in 2027.

There is an existing Parks Master Plan which was endorsed by Council in 2010 and many of the recommendations have been delivered. The work underway is a renewal of the 2010 plan but the focus is being expanded to include all outdoor public spaces and the expanded scope provides an opportunity to look at public spaces such as:

- Parks
- Piers and Decks
- Converted Streets
- Plazas and Squares
- Boulevards
- Trails and Greenways

On completion of the presentation, the following comments were provided by committee members:

In terms of barriers, Victoria Park requires more maintenance particularly the trails, and the tree roots which may be a tripping hazard, as well as the entrance that may be challenging for people with mobility challenges. In addition, Ottawa Gardens is not accessible because of its slope and narrow and more could be done with that space.

## **9. Emerging Issues and Survey Update**

Committee members were informed that four responses were received from the recent survey, and the top three priorities identified were as follows:

- The built environment

- Education and awareness
- Policy and programs

Since the built environment was the topic that received the most amount of feedback, for the next meeting under the emerging issues section, committee members were requested to think about areas in the municipality that are easy to navigate and if there are parts of the municipality that are being avoided or uncomfortable or areas that are difficult to navigate.

#### **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

#### **Next Meeting:**

- Thursday, May 28, 2026

In-person at the District of North Vancouver Municipal Hall and online via Microsoft Teams