

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

From: Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Committee

Date: July 9, 2024

Subject: 2024 – 2nd Quarter Activity Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receives this report for information.

BACKGROUND:

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC) is a Select Committee of Council established to provide advice and recommendations to Council on matters relating to citizens with disabilities, seniors and other citizens with access issues that may impede participation in everyday aspects of community living.

The AIAC mandate is as follows:

- a) To inform all citizens of the Committee's purpose and to identify existing social and physical barriers.
- b) To provide advice and information in regard to future planning of municipal services, programs and facilities.
- c) To work with Council to increase public awareness of the issues of accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities, seniors, and all citizens.

2nd Quarterly Activity Report

Committee members are always present in the community being cognizant of physical barriers that can or may impede access or inclusion navigating community facilities and spaces. In fact, some of us have even gone so far to recognize/identify barriers in Prince George. Members frequently visit businesses and encourage owners/manager to consider making changes, even small ones, to make their business more "user friendly." In addition, we frequently provide information about grants that are available such as the Façade Improvement and Accessibility Grants. We continue to offer our "walk and roll" site visits where we create a more in-depth inspection of the business and provide information and/or recommendations that to consider

should they receive funding or are completing minor repairs/renovations. Many businesses fear changes, especially the cost!

Committee members attend, most if not all, community events. We may not host a table but we visit vendors, share our business card, or just chat with community members about what the Access and Inclusion Committee does..." we provide advice and recommendations to Council on matters relating to citizens with disabilities, seniors and other citizens with access issues that may impede participation in everyday aspects of community living. "

We listen to concerns, we receive phone calls and emails from groups and/or individuals that have a concern i.e., condition/or lack of sidewalks, beach access, washroom facilities condition or lack of in public spaces, or an organization looking for input when they are planning a community event. Not all inquiries have a negative vibe, some are incredibly positive such as the new accessible parking at the recreation complex, accessible picnic tables, all the flowers and trees and all the paving.

Committee members are also members of other organizations or groups that support the community and as a member we can share and receive information that may impact or duplicated community projects. We are always looking for ways to create awareness and understanding of what access and inclusion means for not just persons with a disability but for everyone to participate in active living and enjoy life in Mackenzie!

Access and Inclusion Committee members are represented through organizations such as the Arts Council, Mackenzie Autumn Lodge Society (New Horizon, Friends Helping Friends and Aging Well at home projects), Williston Lake Elders Society, Better at Home, Rural Health and a newly formed Rural Health Seniors Group (this group represents Valemount, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, Burns Lake, and McBride).

This quarter (May 9th) we did two Walk and Roll inspections, both for the District of Mackenzie – Main Office and Public Works. In addition to district staff and committee members there was a representatives from Northern Health, Occupational Therapist Elliot Flockhart and his student Sarah Foot participated in this walk through. This is the second time that Elliot has participated in an inspection and is an eye opener himself and his students. Results submitted to the District Office.

Also, on May 9th three members of the committee members met with the District of Operations and Corporate Services at the Recreation Centre to discuss the changes to accessible parking and the curb cuts in the front parking area. The phrase "seeing is believing" comes to mind as it was very clear that district staff understood the requests but through a demonstration and discussion, they actually understood the why and how these changes would improve access for someone with mobility issues. We were able to discuss the impacts of parking in front of curb cuts and the space required to transfer from a vehicle to a mobility device. Committee members

felt this was a remarkably successful meeting and the public works has said that they would be asking committee members for their assistance with future projects. A win/win meeting!

The Age-Friendly Accessibility and Inclusion Action Plan report continues to be a guide for the committee, and we are making every effort we can to support and action items. We continue to strengthen our relationship with service groups and organizations that have a similar vision or cause i.e., Mackenzie Seniors, Better at Home, Mackenzie Community Service and the Age Well at home projects, designed for seniors and other vulnerable populations.

A complete list of activities for this quarter is attached to this document.

Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the committee meeting held on May 22, 2024 have been attached for Council's consideration.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Community and Social Development

- Our investment in the municipality's services and infrastructure, our commitment to principles of social equity and well-being, and our belief in the value of resident engagement, creates a healthy community in which everyone feels valued and enjoys a high quality of life.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Elizabeth Blackburn, Committee Chair

Reviewed by: Councillor McMeeken, Committee Liaison; Corporate and Financial Services

Approved by: Chief Administrative Officer

2nd Quarter Committee Activities:

2024	Activity:
April 8	Trail Rider showcase/demo and discussion
April 11	New Horizon – Senior Gathering Planning Meeting
April 11	Adaptive Trail Mobility Equipment & Programming 101 presented by American Trails part of the Advancing Trails webinar series
April 12	Quarter 1 Report Submitted (January – March 2024)
April 14 - 20	April 14-20 Volunteer Appreciation Week Various community events Seniors, Friends Helping Friends, social media
April 16	Autumn Lodge Age Well at Home Planning and Implementation
April 16	Williston Lake Elders Society – Care Home meeting
April 16	Autumn Lodge Age Well at Home Planning and Implementation
April 19	Chamber of Commerce – Access support visit
April 20	Earth Day activities Mackenzie Community Arts – volunteer supports
April 22	Rural Health Meeting
April 24	New Horizon host Dan Levitt – Senior Advocate
April 24	New Horizon Stakeholder Meeting – also attended by Sr Advocate
April 25	Access and Inclusion Committee meeting – update & prep
April 30	Supporting Community During Weather Related Emergencies (Dave)
May 7	Community Coalition Meeting
May 9	Rec Centre meeting with Public Works re: parking
May 9	Walk and Roll site visit – Public Works and District Office
May 11	Emergency Preparedness meeting
May 21	Williston Lake Elders Society Meeting
May 22	New Horizon Stakeholder Meeting
May 22	Access and Inclusion Committee meeting
May 23	Adaptive Trails (Kimberly) online
May 23	Accessibility informal visit to ACE (Liz)
May 27	Rick Hansen webinar The Power of Mind Friendly Communities
May 27	Rural Health Meeting
May 29	Red Shirt Day
May 30	Pride Flag raising
May 30	Morfee Lake Scramble meeting regarding event inclusion
June 1	Senior Gathering Event – communities from PG, Chetwynd, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake, Vanderhoof. Sharing information and how to access the isolated members of our communities