

## **COUNCIL REPORT**

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Committee

**Date:** June 23, 2025

**Subject:** 2nd Quarter Activity Report

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### **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 regarding future planning of municipal services, programs, and facilities.
- c) To work with the Council to increase public awareness of the issues of accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities, seniors, and all citizens.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Activity Report**

Committee members continue to be present in the community being cognizant of barriers that can or may impede access or inclusion navigating community facilities and spaces. As we learn more about access and inclusion, we are more and more conscientious of what exists and what changes could still evolve to increase the quality of life for some community members.

We are always cognizant of our surroundings actively looking at our surroundings and listening to community members as a means of identifying barriers to access and/or inclusion. Most members belong to other organizations and can share the message of how important it is to

accommodate the needs of all community residents, young and old alike. One for all and all for one!

Committee members make themselves aware of district events, opportunities and government operations through participation, social media and reading councils minutes or attending meetings. The live streaming and being able to view meetings after the fact are extremely advantageous.

### **Chamber of Commerce Spring Expo**



- **Theme: Hidden Disabilities**
- *Not all disabilities or impairments are visible.*
- *Did you know that 80% of all disabilities are invisible?*

Visitors to the booth were invited to disclose whether they had a hidden or invisible disability and to share this information by writing the name of their disability on a raindrop-shaped card to be displayed on our umbrella. The objective was to illustrate to the community the prevalence of invisible disabilities and to reassure individuals that they are not alone.

We felt that this was our most successful expo! We were praised for raising awareness, influencing changes, supporting organizations and businesses, and maintaining our community presence. A copy of the results is attached for your reference.

During the expo we were able to connect with businesses that we had not reached out to and they were very interested in hearing about access ideas for their workplace. We provided ideas and offered to do a Walk and Roll assessment at their convenience.

Kimberly spoke with Kyle Giddens, who was interested in our work but unaware of the government mandate for communities to have an Accessibility and Inclusion Committee. Kyle emphasized that the legislature lacked accessibility and inclusion. In fact, he suggested that she visit and provide feedback

We became aware of a couple of accessibility issues while in attendance and shared our concerns with the Chamber staff. Namely, electrical/power cords not secured to the floor, creating a tripping or mobility hazard. The staging was not accessible for all. Additionally, it was suggested that additionally rest area seating be placed on the outer perimeter of the venue. even though there was a designated rest area.

We will also share a concern with the recreation centre regarding the access ramps located at the gate entrances to the arena.

One other comment that has been reported to staff via our committee meeting was related to the Gantahaz Lake recreation site where there is no safe access to the water.

The committee would also like to add some information to the website related to what is a Walk and Roll assessment; and acknowledging participating businesses. We are working on suggested wording and a list of those businesses or organizations that deserve recognition.

We have reformatted the inspection forms that we developed for the port-a-potties within the District. These new forms will be easier to read and understand. We will update our findings and share with staff and Public Works in the near future.

We are currently updating the Kate Milne Action Plan items allocated to the Access and Inclusion Committee this summary will be forwarded to staff shortly. Also, working on compiling our findings of the "outdoor washroom inventory".

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

### **Committee Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the committee meetings held **on June 25, 2025, 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, Chair

**Reviewed by:** Corporate and Financial Services

**Approved by:** Chief Administrative Officer