

## Appendix D: List of 2019 Financial Plan Motions

### **ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP 2019 BUDGET INPUT**

That Council forward this report with the recommendations from the Accessibility Working Group to the 2019 budget process to receive the financial implications of all of the un-actioned recommendations.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Since its inception in 2015, the *Accessibility Working Group (AWG)* has raised a number of issues for the City's consideration. The establishment of a city-wide accessibility policy and framework was a key recommendation of the Working Group. This project is currently under development and includes the following within the approved scope of work:

- City-wide accessibility policy
- Accessibility guidelines and standards
- Training and awareness for city staff
- Dedicated staff position to support enhanced accessibility in City services and projects
- Cross-department accessibility planning
- Risk, budget and prioritization of accessibility actions to set a multi-year barrier reduction plan
- Accessibility Impact lens
- Progress monitoring and reporting
- Compliance and enforcement
- Individual Accommodation
- New terms of reference and operational guidelines for an Accessibility Working Group

The comprehensive list of topics, issues, and ideas that have been raised at the Working Group meetings and/or through formal motions have been shared with the City's consulting team for their professional consideration and integration into draft documents.

City staff plan to present the draft accessibility framework and policy to the Accessibility Working Group in Q1 2019 for review and insights, before presenting to Council and completing broader public consultation. The framework will provide further direction to staff in the prioritization and recommendations for healthy, long-term funding requirements for this program. Staff would assess that Framework completion and subsequent financial planning is critical *before* any major changes are made to funding allocations identified by any single stakeholder group.

There are 5 motions that were specifically identified by the AWG for consideration in the 2019 Financial Plan.

**As the actions for the Accessibility Framework will occur outside of the 2019 financial planning process, Council may wish to allocate funding for potential expenditures before the 2020 financial planning process or to accelerate certain actions within the calendar year. Council could consider allocating the already planned \$250,000 addition to the Accessibility Capital Reserve to an operating reserve instead to be able to fund initiatives that are not capital in nature, such as staff training.**

**MOTION 1: Barriers in Council Documents and Procedures:** *That Council direct staff to research and plan to address barriers in the Council documents and webcasting service and*

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*system/page and report to Council on financial implications as part of the 2019 Financial Planning process.*

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Accessibility Working Group has identified barriers related to the publishing of documents and webcasting services for persons with disabilities. Specific topics include, but are not limited to:

1. People with hearing impairments being able to watch webcasts
2. Reliability of webcasts for people who cannot attend in person at city hall
3. Navigation issues on the page for people using screen readers
4. Lack of process for people who cannot attend City Hall in person

### **FINANCIAL & HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The development of the City-wide accessibility policy and framework includes establishment of tools to prioritize investments to reduce systematic barriers in different areas, including city communications and governance documents.

A few of the recommendations can be implemented quite easily and will be actioned. Closed captioning for the webcasts will be implemented, to enable people with hearing impairments to watch the webcasts. This functionality is part of the existing system. Staff have established additional procedures with the service provider to reduce reliability issues of the webcasts, including adjusting automatic re-boot schedules of backend systems. Staff will continue to monitor this. For the navigation issues we will explore options to improve screen reader access to the webcasting landing pages. Should the options for improving the navigation issues be more difficult than anticipated, staff will report back to Council.

The remaining recommendations are best integrated as part of broader city governance considerations. The implications of introducing processes to appear before Council without attending in person should be analyzed as part of a comprehensive approach to support effective decision-making. For resource implications of such a review, please refer to the Strategic Plan motion response.

**MOTION 2: Accessibility of the Planted Environment:** *That Council direct staff to plan, scope, cost and look at options to resource a project for 2019 to consult, research, analyze and develop a long-term, phased plan and policies for addressing accessibility of the planted environment, to remove barriers for people with environmental disabilities, consistent with the accessibility objectives of the Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan.*

### **BACKGROUND:**

Balancing accessibility considerations with pollinator habitat is a complicated task given the numerous variables at play in the outside environment and the relatively limited ability to control all sources of allergens. The characteristics of Victoria's natural ecosystem must also be taken into account. For example, Garry Oaks are high on the allergy index scale and yet are a critically important part of the City's natural ecosystem.

In November 2017, Council directed staff to work with the Accessibility Working Group and Urban Food Table and to report back on options for balancing accessibility considerations with pollinator habitat, including in the vicinity of playgrounds.

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In July 2019, through the Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan, staff reported back on these issues and committed to undertaking two actions in an effort to balance accessibility considerations with the management of the City's natural habitats. This includes working with the Accessibility Working Group and the Urban Food Table on the development of information resources for the public in effort to raise awareness among residents about allergen considerations and pollinator plants in the public realm; and, developing a reference list for staff that identifies low allergen plants that are sensitive to Victoria's natural ecosystem. This work is underway and will be completed in 2019.

### **FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Should Council wish to undertake a more detailed study to address accessibility considerations within the planted environment, staff recommend *developing a scope of work in 2019* for a consultant to assist the City with a study in the 2020. Staff estimate the cost of the study to be \$100,000.

**MOTION 3: Accessible / Barrier-Free Parking:** *That Council direct staff, when reporting back to Council as part of Financial Plan with resource estimates for AWG recommendations, that staff consider combining the AWG's recommendations regarding conducting a parking study for City-provided parking, with the scope of the accessible parking study for privately-provided parking, to determine any efficiencies that might be gained.*

See response under a separate parking motion that covers accessible parking standards on private lands and on City streets / parkades.

**MOTION 4: Accessibility Awareness Training:** *That one-time operational funding for 2019 be allocated, sufficient to address recommendations arising from the Accessibility Framework, with the highest priority activity being delivery of accessibility awareness training to staff and Council, consistent with recommendations from the Accessibility Framework consultant's pending training needs assessment.*

### **BACKGROUND:**

Staff training and education is a topic included in the city-wide accessibility policy and framework which is under development. This motion requests that Council provide an allocation of funds specifically for rolling out training and development activities in 2019 after adoption of the framework.

The BC Public Service has recently launched a three-year action plan to support Diversity and Inclusion. As part of this action plan, a new training for provincial government employees will be launched in the Spring of 2019. The City is exploring opportunities to access Provincial training and will be meeting with representatives from the BC Learning Agency in January 2019 to gain insight into the applicability and focus of their inclusion training. It is possible the Government of BC may launch additional resources in future to support accessibility, as Bill M219 The British Columbia Accessibility Act has had first reading.

### **FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Allocation of \$30,000 towards the *City's Core Learning Program* to initiate new accessibility and inclusion awareness training would help to accelerate training actions in 2019 for frontline staff, the City's Management team and Council. Staging and sequencing of learning should first be delivered to the Senior Leadership Team and Management so that they are equipped to support

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further roll-out. In order to manage the operational impacts, a staged approach will be used with existing staff while newly hired staff will participate within their first year of being hired. Additional work will inform the 2020 budget cycle on appropriate funding for on-going support training for all staff.

**MOTION 5: Accessible and Audible Pedestrian Signal implementation:** *That Council direct staff to develop and implement a plan to install APS/audible signals at all existing controlled intersections/ crossings, to be completed by 2021 and that staff work with the AWG to determine priority intersections/crossings to be addressed each year.*

### **BACKGROUND:**

Accessible Pedestrian Signals are Audible Pedestrian Signals (APS) with enhanced features (locator tones/vibro-tactile pushbuttons) intended to provide improved accessibility for users with visual impairments. Many traffic signals are already updated with audible tones, but do not include the APS with enhanced features.

In 2018 the city installed APS with enhanced features at the following locations:

- Gorge/Washington
- Hillside/Gosworth
- Bay/Richmond
- Quadra/Finlayson

The following intersections have been identified for the installation of audible tones and APS with enhanced features in 2019:

- Quadra/Caledonia
- Quadra/Fisgard
- Johnson/Fernwood
- Humboldt/Wharf/Government

With the completion of the intersections identified above, the City will have completed all intersections identified by the Accessibility Working Group and funded by the accessibility reserve. A total of 79 intersections in the City have audible tones with an additional 5 installations planned in 2019. With a total of 132 signalized intersections in the City there are a remaining 49 signals without audible tones. The typical cost of retrofitting a signal with audible tones is \$14,000 representing a funding commitment of approximately \$229,000/year over three years.

A total of 10 intersections in the City have APS with enhanced features. With a total of 132 signalized intersections in the City there are a remaining 122 signals without APS with enhanced features. The typical cost of retrofitting a signal with APS with enhanced features is \$15,000 representing a funding commitment of approximately \$610,000/year over three years. In order to accommodate APS, traffic signal hardware upgrades could be required, which could impact costs.

APS at traffic signals is an existing program within the City in alignment with the city's broader direction to develop a barrier free street environment. Priority is given to those locations identified by interested stakeholders and by staff's own assessments taking into account factors including pedestrian volumes and adjacent land uses. APS is also included in all new signal installations, within any changes associated with new development, other capital projects and as part of traffic signal rebuilds.

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### **FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The Accessibility Framework currently under development will help staff and the public understand the level of priority and in turn investment that should be given to all of the above programs.

Should Council wish to accelerate the funding or actions in these program areas ahead of the completion of the Accessibility Framework, then additional staff and resources would need to be made available now, depending on what mix of initiatives they wish to support. Additional direction from Council and details of scope would be required to define resultant resource needs. The current uncommitted capital funding available in the reserve is \$947,000.

The Accessible Framework will inform Council, staff and the public of important considerations for how to best spend any accessibility investment and also how best to prioritize that against other important City safety and service areas.

The framework (completing in Q1/Q2 2019) will provide further direction to staff in the prioritization and recommendations for healthy, long-term funding requirements for this program. Staff would assess that Framework completion and subsequent financial planning is critical *before* any major adjustments are made to funding allocations identified by stakeholders.

Master planning processes, like the Accessibility Framework, that are currently underway, are the best tools we have for defining asset-group long term funding needs. Improved tools / systems to prioritize projects across domains would improve our ability to prioritize across asset groups. Awaiting the outcomes from the Framework and other priority management plans will greatly reduce the risk of spending funds in a manner that does not align with priorities of public safety and other important municipal services. That being said, in anticipation of the completion of the Accessibility Framework and funding needs, Council may consider allocating the already planned additional funding of \$250,000 to an operating reserve rather than the Accessibility Capital Reserve, so that the funding can be used for initiatives that are not capital in nature, such as training and program development.

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### **PARKING:**

That Council direct staff to report back on funding in the budget for policy work in 2019 on accessibility, including accessible parking.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Where previously the 2012 BC Building Code prescribed minimum accessible parking supply requirements, the new 2018 BCBC refers to the National Building Code which simply defers all regulatory authority to the local jurisdiction. As such, the City will need to establish new supply requirements to be included in Schedule C under the City of Victoria Zoning Bylaw.

The accessibility working group has also identified the need to develop design guidelines for on-street or parkade parking stalls. This work can be done at the same time and would inform a subsequent retrofit program on City streets and in the parkades.

### **FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The estimated cost of undertaking this work is \$100,000 and includes:

- Review and collate previous and current City documentation including feedback, information and insights already documented from the Accessibility Working Group and members of the Victoria Disability Resource Centre's parking committee
- Undertake a best-practice review of barrier-free parking regulations in other jurisdictions;
- Review guidance provided by National and International standards;
- Development of a new set of requirements for accessible / barrier free parking and engage with stakeholder groups including:
  - The Accessibility Working Group;
  - Victoria Disability Resource Centre;
  - Community Association Land Use Committees
  - Urban Development Institute; and
  - Rental / property management organization(s).
- Host a public event to share draft recommendations for public review and comment;
- Prepare a final report that includes:
  - A summary of the process undertaken;
  - Recommended requirements and associated zoning bylaw amendments;
  - Recommended operational design guidelines for on-street and parkade accessible parking stalls

There is no budget established for this project in the 2019 Financial Plan. Resources would need to be allocated. Staff assess that this work is led by existing staff in the Transportation Division with support from an external consultant, and existing staff in Parking Services, Engagement and Sustainable Community Planning & Development departments. Funding for a city-wide retrofit program would be required as a part of 2020 and 2021 financial plan to implement the recommended changes to on-street and parkade parking stalls. Accelerating this work before the introduction of the Accessibility Framework risks expenditures that are misaligned with other important accessibility priorities. These risks are mitigated somewhat by the coupling of this work with the on-street and parkade accessible parking assessment project.