



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Planning Committee **Date:** November 2, 2020
From: Kim Somerville **File:** 07-3190-01/2020-Vol
 Director, Community Social Development 01

Re: **Proposed Updates to Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 and Rescindment of City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012**

Staff Recommendations

1. That the proposed updates to Access and Inclusion Policy 4012, as outlined in the staff report titled, “Proposed Updates to Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 and Rescindment of City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012”, dated November 2, 2020, from the Director, Community Social Development, be approved; and
2. That City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 be rescinded.

Kim Somerville
 Director, Community Social Development
 (604-247-4671)

Att. 4

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Arts, Culture & Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Facilities and Project Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Building Approvals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Human Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	

Staff Report

Origin

The City currently has two policies related to accessibility and inclusion: the City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 (Attachment 1), adopted in 1994, and the Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 (Attachment 2), amended in 2014. Since the time both policies have been adopted or updated, there have been significant advancements in improving accessibility and furthering inclusion in everyday life. As a result, City staff have identified the need to review the two policies to ensure that they reflect today’s best practices and terminology as well as Richmond’s current context.

The purpose of this report is to present the updated Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 (Attachment 3) to City Council for adoption and to recommend that City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 be rescinded.

This report supports City Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategic Focus Area #4 – An Active and Thriving Richmond:

An active and thriving community characterized by diverse social and wellness programs, services and spaces that foster health and well-being for all.

This report also supports the 2013–2022 Social Development Strategy actions:

3.7 Ensure that, to the extent possible, City facilities and the public realm (e.g. parks, sidewalks) are accessible.

16.3 Undertake a comprehensive review of City policies and practices from a diversity perspective, identifying gaps and proposed improvements.

Background

Richmond has undergone tremendous changes in its population over the last several decades becoming one of Canada’s most diverse cities with over 60 per cent of its population born outside the country. It is widely acknowledged that Richmond’s cultural diversity contributes to community vibrancy and enrichment. However, it also presents challenges in communication and the potential marginalization of some population segments. In addition, the number of individuals living with a disability has been increasing city-wide and has resulted in greater demand for services for persons with disabilities. According to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, 22 per cent of Canadians ages 15 years and over identify as having a disability. As Richmond’s population continues to age, it is anticipated that the number of individuals living with a disability will continue to increase resulting in continued demand for specialized services.

These changes in Richmond have also brought a broad range of accessibility and inclusion challenges therefore, it is important that City policies reflect Richmond’s current demographic context in order for the City to respond.

City Accessibility and Inclusion Initiatives

The City's Official Community Plan (OCP), adopted in 2012, and the Social Development Strategy, adopted in 2013, identify access and inclusion as key priorities. The City continues to work to ensure that facilities, parks, programs and services are accessible and inclusive for all individuals, regardless of ability and background, and that staff apply an accessibility and inclusion lens when developing programs and services. To further the City's approach to accessibility and inclusion, several initiatives have been implemented to ensure all Richmond residents can fully participate in community life.

Since 1998, the City and the Community Associations and Societies have provided opportunities for children and youth from low-income families to participate in programs and activities through the Recreation Fee Subsidy Program (RFSP). In 2017, City Council adopted the expanded RFSP to include adults and seniors to ensure that residents of all ages, regardless of their financial situation, can participate in a wide range of parks, culture and recreation programs. The City also partners with KidSport Richmond and Canadian Tire Jumpstart to remove financial barriers to participation in sports and physical activities for children and youth.

In 2018, City Council adopted The Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines and Technical Specifications to incorporate enhanced accessibility and barrier-free features in City-owned and City-leased facilities. Implemented in the development of Minoru Centre for Active Living, these guidelines combined with innovative programs and services have set a new standard for accessibility in City facilities. Additionally, Richmond was a pilot city in the Rick Hansen Foundation's Accessibility Certification program with 28 facilities reviewed in 2018, which furthers the City's commitment to improving accessibility. The City also continues to identify and address barriers in the community through a long-standing relationship with Richmond Centre for Disability.

In 2019, City Council approved the installation of Richmond's first rainbow crosswalk on Minoru Boulevard that serves as a reminder of the City's ongoing commitment to building a welcoming and inclusive community. That same year, City Council adopted the first Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029 to further enhance and build on the City's social inclusion practices. Through innovative and collaborative approaches to intercultural connections, the Cultural Harmony Plan supports the active participation of all residents in various aspects of community life, regardless of their background and length of time in Canada.

Furthermore, the City continues to recognize and celebrate Richmond's diverse cultures and unique heritage through intercultural celebrations and events including Doors Open and the Richmond World Festival. In addition, the City supports the advancement of equity, diversity, and inclusion practices in the community by offering educational and networking events such as the annual Diversity Symposium.

Analysis

Staff completed a best practice review of municipal and industry accessibility and inclusion policies to ensure that the proposed policy revisions reflect current terminology and standards. The City also collaborates with community organizations, such as the Richmond Centre for Disability, the Rick Hansen Foundation, the Richmond Therapeutic Riding Association and the Community

Collaboration Table to share information about gaps in services and barriers faced by vulnerable groups. In addition, the City has formed an Interdepartmental Accessibility Committee to discuss how accessibility can be advanced in City planning and operations. Through these efforts, staff determined that Policy 4012 would benefit by including up to date language that supports actions to further access and inclusion in the areas of community engagement, staff training and public awareness. Additionally, staff identified that language in the City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 could be incorporated into the revised Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 so that all accessibility-related items are reflected under one City policy. With these considerations, staff recommend the following:

- 1) Amend Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 (adopted October 13, 1981 and amended December 8, 2014); and
- 2) Rescind City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 (adopted February 14, 1994).

Amendments to Access and Inclusion Policy 4012

The following amendments are proposed to the existing Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 to better reflect the City’s current approach to accessibility and inclusion. Table 1 below shows an item-by-item comparison of the current Policy 4012 and the proposed updated Policy 4012. The item indicated in the proposed column shows where the item is located in the proposed updated policy.

Table 1: Side-by-side Comparison of Current and Proposed Items for Access and Inclusion Policy 4012

Current Policy	Proposed Updated Policy
Item 1: Acknowledging and keeping abreast of the accessibility and inclusiveness needs and challenges of diverse population groups in Richmond.	Removed from proposed policy.
Item 2: Ensuring that the Official Community Plan and other key City plans, strategies and policies incorporate measures to support Richmond’s efforts to be an accessible and inclusive city.	Item 3: Incorporating measures in the Official Community Plan and other key City plans, strategies, guidelines, policies and bylaws that further advance Richmond’s efforts to be an accessible and inclusive city.
Item 3: Developing programs and adopting practices to ensure Richmond residents and visitors have access to a range of opportunities to participate in the economic, social, cultural and recreational life of the City.	Item 1: Enhancing equitable access to City facilities, parks, programs and services to all who live, work, play and learn in Richmond.
Item 4: Collaborating with senior levels of government, partner organizations and stakeholder groups to promote social and physical infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of people who visit, work and live in Richmond.	Item 9: Collaborating with partner organizations and stakeholder groups to address the diverse needs of Richmond’s population.

Current Policy	Proposed Updated Policy
	Item 10: Advocating to senior levels of government for funding and programs to advance accessibility and inclusion in Richmond.
Item 5: Promoting barrier free access to the City’s facilities, parks, programs and services.	Item 2: Removing barriers to participation faced by vulnerable groups by adopting practices and accommodations so that every resident can take part in all aspects of community life.
Item 6: Promoting a welcoming and respectful municipal workplace.	<p>Item 6: Providing ongoing diversity and inclusion training to staff and volunteers in order to foster a respectful workplace and to respond to the diverse needs of Richmond’s population.</p> <p>Item 8: Providing public awareness and education about the importance of a welcoming, accessible and inclusive Richmond.</p>
Item 7: Providing information to the public in a manner that respects the diverse needs and characteristics of Richmond residents.	<p>Item 5: Communicating information and providing means of public engagement that takes into consideration the diversity and unique characteristics of Richmond residents.</p> <p>Item 7: Continuing to seek community input from a wide range of individuals, community organizations and stakeholders in the planning and development of facilities, policies and services.</p>

Rescinding City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012

The purpose of rescinding Policy 2012 is to align and strengthen the City’s approach to furthering accessibility in all aspects of the built environment by incorporating language from Policy 2012 into Policy 4012.

Table 2 below shows a comparison of the current wording of Policy 2012 and its proposed wording in the proposed updated Policy 4012. The item indicated in the proposed column shows where the item is located in the proposed updated policy.

Table 2: Side-by-side Comparison of Policy 2012 and Proposed Item on City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 4012

Current Policy 2012	Proposed Updated Policy 4012
<p>Item 1: All City-owned buildings shall offer more than the minimum accessibility standards and should ensure easy access to all members of the community. In support of this policy, Council has endorsed the <u>Accessibility Guidelines for City-Owned Buildings</u> (available from the Permits and Records Department and Facilities Services Department.).</p>	<p>Item 4: Advancing accessibility in the City’s built environment through the use of universal design principles and the City’s Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines.</p>


The proposed revisions to Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 acknowledge the accessibility and inclusion needs of Richmond’s diverse population and address the importance of community engagement, communication, education and awareness, and advocacy. These revisions also strengthen the language and clarity of the policy so staff can better serve the needs of Richmond residents. As Richmond’s population continues to diversify and the number of residents with disabilities increases, the proposed amendments will support actions to address emerging community needs and further Richmond as a leader in accessibility and inclusion.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The proposed amendments to the Access and Inclusion Policy 4012 and the rescindment of the City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012 are intended to provide a more effective framework to assist the City’s efforts to further advance accessibility and inclusion in Richmond. The proposed amendments create a policy framework that reflect current and future social inclusion priorities and supports the work required to further reduce barriers to participation in City facilities, programs, and services. The City will continue to work with internal and external partners to advance accessibility and inclusion in Richmond and foster a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone that lives, works and plays here.


 Melanie Burner
 Accessibility Coordinator
 (604-276-4390)


 Dorothy Jo
 Inclusion Coordinator
 (604-276-4391)

- Att. 1: Current City Buildings – Accessibility Policy 2012
- 2: Current Access and Inclusion Policy 4012
- 3: Proposed Access and Inclusion Policy 4012
- 4: Redline Version of Access and Inclusion Policy 4012



Page 1 of 1	City Buildings – Accessibility	Policy 2012
Adopted by Council: February 14, 1994		

POLICY 2012:

It is Council policy that:

All City-owned buildings shall offer more than the minimum accessibility standards and should ensure easy access to all members of the community.

In support of this policy, Council has endorsed the Accessibility Guidelines for City-Owned Buildings (available from the Permits and Records Department and Facilities Services Department).



Page 1 of 1	Access and Inclusion	Policy 4012
Adopted by Council: October 13, 1981 Amended by Council: December 8, 2014		

POLICY 4012:

It is Council policy that:

Richmond is an accessible and inclusive city by:

1. Acknowledging and keeping abreast of the accessibility and inclusiveness needs and challenges of diverse population groups in Richmond.
2. Ensuring that the Official Community Plan and other key City plans, strategies and policies incorporate measures to support Richmond's efforts to be an accessible and inclusive city.
3. Developing programs and adopting practices to ensure Richmond residents and visitors have access to a range of opportunities to participate in the economic, social, cultural and recreational life of the City.
4. Collaborating with senior levels of government, partner organization and stakeholder groups to promote social and physical infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of people who visit, work and live in Richmond.
5. Promoting barrier free access to the City's facilities, parks, programs and services.
6. Promoting a welcoming and respectful municipal workplace.
7. Providing information to the public in a manner that respects the diverse needs and characteristics of Richmond residents.



POLICY 4012:

It is Council policy that:

Richmond is an accessible and inclusive city by:

1. Enhancing equitable access to City facilities, parks, programs and services to all who live, work, play and learn in Richmond.
2. Removing barriers to participation faced by vulnerable groups by adopting practices and accommodations so that every resident can take part in all aspects of community life.
3. Incorporating measures in the Official Community Plan and other key City plans, strategies, guidelines, policies and bylaws that further advance Richmond's efforts to be an accessible and inclusive city.
4. Advancing accessibility in the City's built environment through the use of universal design principles and the City's Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines.
5. Communicating information and providing means of public engagement that takes into consideration the diversity and unique characteristics of Richmond residents.
6. Providing ongoing diversity and inclusion training to staff and volunteers in order to foster a respectful workplace and to respond to the diverse needs of Richmond's population.
7. Continuing to seek community input from a wide range of individuals, community organizations and stakeholders in the planning and development of facilities, policies and services.
8. Providing public awareness and education about the importance of a welcoming, accessible and inclusive Richmond.
9. Collaborating with partner organizations and stakeholder groups to address the diverse needs of Richmond's population.
10. Advocating to senior levels of government for funding and programs to advance accessibility and inclusion in Richmond.



Page 1 of 2	Access and Inclusion	Policy 4012
Adopted by Council: October 13, 1981 Amended by Council: December 8, 2014		

POLICY 4012:

It is Council policy that:

Richmond is an accessible and inclusive city by:

1. Acknowledging and keeping abreast of the accessibility and inclusiveness needs and challenges of diverse population groups in Richmond. Enhancing equitable access to City facilities, parks, programs and services to all who live, work, play and learn in Richmond.
- 1.2. Removing barriers to participation faced by vulnerable groups by adopting practices and accommodations so that every resident can take part in all aspects of community life.
- 2.3. Ensuring that incorporating measures in the Official Community Plan and other key City plans, strategies and, guidelines, policies and bylaws that further advance incorporate measures to support Richmond's efforts to be an accessible and inclusive city.
4. Developing programs and adopting practices to ensure Richmond residents and visitors have access to a range of opportunities to participate in the economic, social, cultural and recreational life of the City. Advancing accessibility in the City's built environment through the use of universal design principles and the City's Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines.
5. Communicating information and providing means of public engagement that takes into consideration the diversity and unique characteristics of Richmond residents.
6. Providing ongoing diversity and inclusion training to staff and volunteers in order to foster a respectful workplace and to respond to the diverse needs of Richmond's population.
7. Continuing to seek community input from a wide range of individuals, community organizations and stakeholders in the planning and development of facilities, policies and services.
- 3.8. Increasing Providing public awareness and education about the importance of a welcoming, accessible and inclusive Richmond.
9. Collaborating with senior levels of government, partner organizations and stakeholder groups to promote social and physical infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of people who visit, work and live in address the diverse needs of Richmond's population.



Adopted by Council: October 13, 1981
Amended by Council: December 8, 2014

- ~~10. Advocating to senior levels of government for funding and programs to advance accessibility and inclusion in Richmond.~~
 - ~~4. Promoting barrier free access to the City's facilities, parks, programs and services.~~
 - ~~5. Promoting a welcoming and respectful municipal workplace.~~
- ~~Providing information to the public in a manner that respects the diverse needs and characteristics of Richmond residents.~~