

# The Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee's Annual Report to City Council

The Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (PDAC) is pleased to provide City Council our 2025 report outlining the various projects, proposals and concerns considered by our committee. The report is divided into three sections, representing the three subcommittees, Accessible City and Transportation, Housing and Social Inclusion.

PDAC acknowledges and appreciates the cooperation and input provided by City staff with respect to the various presentations which we have received throughout the year.

PDAC looks forward to continuing to provide our feedback and advice on the various issues which City staff will present to our committee throughout 2026.

## Social Inclusion Subcommittee

PDAC Members: Salina Dewar (Chair), Tasia Alexis, Sarah van Barsen, Vikram Bubber

External Members: Laura Mackenrot (former PDAC) Chair

The Social Inclusion Subcommittee is a smaller subcommittee than it was during our last term, and this, combined with the timing of City events, led to us focusing on some of the tasks set out in PDAC's Workplan.

### **Elections:**

Given that there was a By-election in April 2025, and there will be a civic election in 2026, this has been a priority issue for the Social Inclusion Subcommittee.

Subcommittee members reached out to Elections Staff beginning in February 2025, as we were unable to connect with our previous elections staff contact. At that time, the subcommittee requested an update on measures that would be put in place, or improved upon, to increase accessibility of the elections process, and invited elections staff to meet with the subcommittee so we could provide feedback ahead of the next election. While we note that some measures have been taken to improve accessibility since the previous civic election, we were disappointed that neither PDAC nor the subcommittee had an opportunity to provide accessibility feedback in time for the 2025 By-Election.

Following the difficulties that many voters faced trying to vote during the by-election, the City has decided to collect feed back through a short-term elections committee rather than attend advisory meetings. The subcommittee chair attended a meeting of the elections committee in mid January. At that meeting the city elections staff outlined additional steps they plan in response to PDAC's

feedback. Elections staff are considering the feasibility of additional measures that PDAC suggested and has requested additional feedback from PDAC. The social inclusion subcommittee will seek feedback from PDAC about this.

In the Fall of 2025, we turned our attention to some of the other workplan goals.

**Jeanette Anderson Street:**

We have re-connected with members of PDAC’s Housing Subcommittee, to resume our work on our recommendations about the erection of a plaque explaining Jeanette Anderson’s contributions towards community inclusion for people with disabilities. Members of both subcommittee’s have reached out to city staff in an effort to determine how best to proceed, and we anticipate that this work will continue as a priority in 2026.

**Other Work by Members of the Social Inclusion Subcommittee:**

In 2026, the Social Inclusion subcommittee expects to resume its efforts to advise the City of Vancouver on washroom accessibility concerns. We have also resumed discussions about how to collaborate with others, including city staff, to ensure that our feedback reflects the intersectional experiences of Vancouver residents with disabilities. We anticipate that promoting the interests and needs of people with disabilities who face additional barriers due to race, gender and sexual orientation, poverty and other personal factors, will be a priority for the remainder of the term.

Subcommittee member Tasia Alexis, along with PDAC Chair Peter Brown, attended the FIFA Human Rights Planning Presentation on September 29, 2025, where they provided input regarding human rights and accessibility concerns.”

## **Accessible City and Transportation Subcommittee**

**PDAC Members:** Peter Brown (Chair), Tasia Alexis, Tommy Leung, John Atoyevi, Madeleine Grant, and Mikeal Frazer

**Former PDAC Members:** Caitlin Anderson (Chair 2023-mid 2025), and Adam Roper (Chair mid to Fall 2025)

**External Members:** Laura Mackenrot (Former Co-chair of PDAC)

The Accessible City and Transportation subcommittee was formed in October 2023, combining the Accessible City and Transportation subcommittees. This move reflects the overlap of these two areas in dealing with accessible public design and movement through the built environment in the city.

Throughout the past year, the Accessible City and Transportation subcommittee has heard from, and provided informed feedback to, presenters conveying projects and proposals of various types which intersected potential accessibility and/or transportation considerations for people with disabilities.

**Accessible Voting:**

In conjunction with our Social Inclusion subcommittee, the focus of this area is to identify and remedy barriers to accessible voting processes which persons with disabilities may face in the upcoming Vancouver civic election in October 2026.

**Accessibility of Playland:**

Various barriers to accessibility of the experience in attending Playland for a person with a disability, were identified, including signage to accessible washrooms, accessibility of rides for a disabled patron and proper accessible parking, were identified through both the on-sight observations of one of our members and the comments of a concerned citizen.

**Proposals for Street and Bus Routes Enhancement:**

Our subcommittee was pleased to hear at an early stage the proposals for various changes to streets, to accommodate bike lanes (e.g. Dunsmuir/Melville Street bike lane project), as well as to enhance the delivery of transit services (e.g. improved transit services on East Hastings Street). Accessibility concerns included the need to ensure proper accessible parking and/or drop off zones remained to allow for access for mobility challenged individuals, proper bus stop infrastructure (including seating), the need to minimize the loss of bus stops resulting in diminished proximity for the disabled user who may have a limited mobility capacity to navigate extended distances, and to provide feedback to reduce barriers caused by floating/island platform bus stops, which introduce bike lanes that separate sidewalks from bus stop access.

**A Review of the Accessibility of the COV Website for Persons with Disabilities Seeking to Identify Accessible Services, Buildings and Parking Within the City:**

The City is encouraged to continue to upgrade the COV Website to allow for a more thorough outline of accessible services, buildings and parking within the City, and to ensure the website is, and remains, as user friendly as possible to those experiencing various types of disabilities. Recommended enhancements included an updated map of accessible parking and the location of accessible parking meters and/or pay stations within the various neighbourhoods within the City, as well as clarification of parking regulations for SPARC permit holders. PDAC look forward to working with the Parking Management Branch on this topic to eliminate any existing barriers to improve upon the experience of persons with disabilities in navigating the accessible parking information on the website.

**Consideration of the Potential Limits/Hazards to Accessibility from Electric Cords Charging on Street Electric Vehicles:**

Feedback was pursued and provided on minimizing the tripping hazard potentially arising from electric cords stretching over sidewalks used by persons with disabilities.

**Accessible Pedestrian Signals:**

Feedback was provided to the Transportation Design Branch to identify the need to eliminate all potential barriers which arise from the various challenges faced by persons with disabilities in using pedestrian signals.

Unfortunately, due to the loss of two previous chairs of our subcommittee, there were meetings within 2025 that had to be postponed. It is hoped that a full slate of subcommittee meetings will be achieved, in order to continue our consideration and input into the many concerns and issues that tend to arise in the planning of upcoming projects and proposals.

Subcommittee member Tasia Alexis, along with PDAC Chair Peter Brown, attended the FIFA Human Rights Planning Presentation on September 29, 2025, where they provided input regarding human rights and accessibility concerns.”

## **Housing Subcommittee**

**PDAC Members:** Sarah van Baarsen (Chair), Tasia Alexis, Tommy Leung, and Mikeal Frazer

**External Members:** Laura Mackenrot (former PDAC Co-Chair), Jane Vorbrodtt (until June 2025), Chris Hofley, Paul Gauthier (former PDAC member), Chris Morrissey (deceased April 2025) and Tina Hubert (until January 2025)

### **Accessible Path:**

The Housing Subcommittee was disappointed to hear that the City is currently unable to commit to any Accessible Path of Travel work as this would involve a substantial overhaul of all the low-density zones, which would require additional funding as mentioned in the City’s [Multi-Year Action Plan: Transforming Attitudes, Embedding Change: The City of Vancouver’s Accessibility Strategy](#). The Housing Subcommittee will continue to advocate for accessible pathways.

### **Urban Design Panel:**

Last term the Housing Subcommittee was pleased to share that Jane Vorbrodtt has been appointed to the Urban Design Panel, and she has helped identify barriers in the built environment in countless incoming projects. Unfortunately, due to receiving inappropriate messages from individuals outside the committee, Jane has stepped down from their volunteer role. We appreciate their invaluable contributions and the Housing Subcommittee remains committed to the inclusion of accessibility in all civic building projects, including bridges, roads, parks, beautification projects, transit systems, civic buildings, and design competitions.

### **Jeanette Anderson Street:**

We have re-connected with members of PDAC’s Social Inclusion Subcommittee, to resume our work on our recommendations about the erection of a plaque explaining Jeanette Anderson’s contributions towards community inclusion for people with disabilities. Members of both subcommittee’s have reached out to city staff in an effort to determine how best to proceed, and we anticipate that this work will continue as a priority in 2026. With this work both subcommittees

are also invested in ensuring that people with disabilities are considered and included in the street naming process and will be providing input where necessary.

**George Pearson Advisory Committee:**

In 2025 Vancouver Coastal Health changed the name of the George Pearson Centre to Oak Care Centre. The Housing Subcommittee remains involved in the advisory committee. During the recent review of plans for 30 individual apartments planned in towers with Vancouver Coastal Health, elevator accessibility was identified as a key concern. As a result, hands-free elevator accessibility options are currently being reviewed to ensure the final approach supports safe and practical access for residents.

**City of Vancouver Accessibility Bylaws, Policies, Standards:**

The Housing Subcommittee provided formal input regarding the 2025 Vancouver Building Bylaw and on City staff's work to explore the housing flexibility and livability benefits of single egress building designs, emphasizing the importance of any updates to the Vancouver Building By-Law should not result in the creation of barriers or reduce the level of safety for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable populations. The Housing Subcommittee hopes to continue to work with City staff to ensure this moving forward.

**The Right Fit; Inventory of Accessible Suites; Distribution based on need:**

The Housing Subcommittee continues to participate and receive updates on the Right Fit's progress, who continue to maintain the shared inventory with their partners and are refining the matching and prioritization process to reflect accessibility requirements, urgency, and readiness. They are also working with the ministry on ongoing program funding and advocating for a significant increase to floating rental subsidies to improve placement stability.