

Bulkley- Nechako Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Mandate

To advise all participating Councils and Boards in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako of the need to establish, develop and maintain equitable policies, services and facilities for persons with disabilities, including, but not limited to: transportation; housing; employment; education; and recreation.

To provide an opportunity for public input on accessibility issues affecting people with disabilities.

To identify barriers to services and facilities encountered by people with disabilities, and partner with local councils and agencies to address them.

To promote initiatives that foster active living, and the full participation of people with disabilities in their communities.

2. Funding

The Committee does not have a specific budget. Financial requests must be submitted to the RDBN Board for approval.

As an inter-agency committee, application may be made to each participating local government for funding to sustain the Committee's activities. The Committee also accepts public donations and seeks various grants.

The Committee also welcomes and appreciates in-kind services, input, and expertise from municipal councils, agencies, businesses, and volunteers on an as needed basis.

3. Membership

The Committee will be comprised of at least seven (7), and up to twelve (12) voting members, representing the public, business, and community interests within the RDBN. The Committee will strive to maintain the following membership criteria:

The Chair of the Committee and the alternate shall be a Director of the RDBN appointed by the RDBN Chair and shall be voting members. Both the Chair and alternate will attend meetings as voting members. These positions comprise the only elected officials from any partner organization to serve on the Committee.

Fifty percent (50%) of members are persons with a disability, or are individuals who support persons with disabilities either at a personal or organizational level;

At least one (1) Indigenous member; and

Reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in BC.

Membership from each community represented by the partnering organizations.

Partner organizations can appoint one non-voting staff member to support the work of the Committee within their organization.

To support the facilitation of the Committee, the RDBN commitment is to provide a Staff Liaison, as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer, to act as administrative support for the Committee and provide a Recording Secretary for all meetings.

4. Appointments

Vacancies for voting members of the Committee will be advertised by the RDBN and the partner community where the vacancy exists; interested individuals shall submit applications to the RDBN.

The RDBN Board shall approve the appointment of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations for membership will be provided to the Board by staff through consultation with partner community representatives.

The appointment of the non-voting staff member(s) on the Committee will be exempt from regulations, which apply to the appointment of voting members.

The RDBN Staff Liaison on the Committee will be appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

5. Voting

Each representative that is appointed by the RDBN Chair and Board, including the Committee Chair and Alternate Chair, has one vote each.

The Committee's preferred method of decision-making is to reach resolution by consensus. However, when consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be conducted, and simple majority will rule.

6. Quorum

A quorum consists five (5) of the eligible voting members, and the Chair or Alternate Chair must be present.

7. Meeting Frequency and Facilitation

In the first year, the Committee shall meet as necessary to complete the Accessibility Plan

and thereafter shall meet quarterly, or at the determination of the Chair.

Meetings will take place at the advertised time at the RDBN Office in Burns Lake. Both in-person and virtual attendance will be supported. All meetings will be open to the public to attend.

8. Reporting Relationship with Municipal Councils and Organization Boards

The RDBN Staff Liaison will be responsible for reporting Accessibility Advisory Committee minutes to all partner organizations promptly.

Minutes shall be included for receipt on partner council/board agendas and councils/boards will make individual decisions about action items to bring forward for consideration.

Partner organizations will also apprise the Advisory Committee of any municipal initiatives involving or having impact on people with disabilities via the RDBN Staff Liaison. This information will be provided to the Advisory Committee via meeting agendas.

Where grant applications for accessibility projects require a Letter of Support from the Committee, partner organizations can request one through the RDBN Staff Liaison and letters will be provided at the discretion of the Committee Chair or Alternate. All letters approved by the Chair or Alternate will be provided on the next scheduled Committee Agenda.

9. Term of Office

Term of Office is two calendar years. Members may re-apply for seats upon completion of their term.

In a case where a member must vacate a seat before the end of the two-year term, another resident representing the same area can apply for appointment to complete the remaining term.

10. Representative Authority

The Committee does not have the authority to pledge the credit of any partner organization, or to authorize any expenditure to be charged against partner organizations.

The Committee members do not have the authority to speak publicly (e.g. to the media) on behalf of the Committee unless so directed by the Board Chair.

11. Minutes

Meeting minutes be taken at each meeting.

Minutes will be provided for receipt to all partner organization councils/boards.

Schedule A – Partner Organizations

The following like organizations have considered these Terms of Reference and provided written confirmation of their participation in the Bulkley- Nechako Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee:

1. Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (all Electoral Areas)
2. District of Fort St. James
3. District of Houston
4. Village of Burns Lake
5. Village of Fraser Lake
6. Village of Telkwa
7. Village of Granisle
8. Fort St. James Public Library
9. Vanderhoof Public Library
10. Burns Lake Public Library
11. Granisle Public Library

*Confirmed Partner Organizations as of July 4, 2023