



Report to Council

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject **Langley Seniors in Action – Loss of Affordable Rental Housing Letter**

From: Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

Doc #: 201619

Date: April 23, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT City Council receive the April 11, 2025 Report to Council titled “Langley Seniors in Action – Loss of Affordable Housing Letter” from the Chief Administrative Officer for information.
2. THAT City Council receive April 17, 2025 Accessibility Advisory Committee Report titled “Langley Seniors in Action – Loss of Affordable Rental Housing Letter” for information.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to bring forward, for information, the letter from Langley Seniors in Action that was emailed to City Council on February 24, 2025 regarding their concern for the loss of affordable housing, and subsequent to that, the motion passed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee on March 6, 2025 regarding the same subject matter.

POLICY:

BC Accessibility Act

Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

On February 24, 2025, Langley Seniors in Action (LSA) emailed a letter to City Council titled “Loss of Affordable Rental Housing” expressing their concern and requesting a meeting with City Council to further discuss the topic. The City responded to LSA and ultimately scheduled a meeting with them on May 5, 2025.

On March 6, 2025, the Accessibility Advisory Committee (ACC) reviewed LSA’s letter and then passed a motion as outlined in the April 17, 2025 ACC’s report.

The AAC report made reference in bold wording below, as to how this topic is applicable to their mandate under the *BC Accessibility Act* as follows:

Accessibility Act

- 2 (1) For the purposes of this Act, a barrier is anything that **hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with an impairment.**
- (2) For certainty and without limiting subsection (1), barriers can be
- (a) caused by environments, attitudes, **practices, policies, information, communications** or technologies, and
 - (b) affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.
- 9 (1) An organization must establish a committee to
- (a) assist the organization to identify barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization, and
 - (b) advise the organization on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization.**

AAC Mandate

2.1. The Committee’s role is to:

- 2.1.1. assist the City in identifying accessibility and inclusion barriers that City staff and community members experience or may experience in the course of interacting with the City in the following areas:
- Employment,
 - **Delivery of Service,**
 - The Built Environment,
 - Information and Communications,
 - Transportation, and
 - Procurement;

2.1.2. advise the City on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the City;

Accessibility, under the *Accessibility Act*, means ensuring everyone, including people with disabilities, can fully participate in society with equal opportunities and without barriers. This includes removing physical, attitudinal, information, and systemic barriers to enable full participation in daily activities and opportunities. The *Accessibility Act* aims to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers that hinder participation in areas like goods and services, information and communication, transportation, employment, the built environment, and education.

The City supports practices and policies that are implemented in such a way as to reduce barriers and ensure the full and equal participation in society of any person with an impairment¹.

For example:

- The District of North Vancouver's draft Accessibility Plan states that one aspect of its accessibility plan is to "improve the physical accessibility of public infrastructure and spaces within our community."²
- The *Accessibility Act* "does not only refer to physical accessibility but also includes the dismantling of systemic, communication or technology barriers. For example, websites that do not function with screen readers and discriminatory policies are also barriers to access."³

However, the motion adopted at the March 6th AAC meeting regarding housing policy is outside the mandate of the AAC, as advised by staff at the time.

What is important is that an Accessibility Plan (Plan) needs to be developed that will identify, remove and prevent barriers to access to people in the organization or interacting with it. The Plan must be reviewed and updated at least once every three years. In developing or updating the Plan, an organization must consult with its accessibility committee and consider specified principles:

- Inclusion
- Adaptability
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Self-determination
- Universal design

¹ Impairment includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic

² Source: Circu LawR, September 2023, Accessible BC Act: Overview and Implications for Organizations

³ Source: Circu LawR, September 2023, Accessible BC Act: Overview and Implications for Organizations

Additionally, in response to the request made by the LSA to discuss the issue with City Council, a meeting has been scheduled on May 5, 2025. Furthermore, staff development of the following initiatives is underway:

1. Re: Relocation Policy CO-84:

The applicability of Council Policy CO-84 to applications that were submitted at the time Policy CO-81 was in effect was discussed at the January 13, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, with a final adopted motion “THAT council direct staff to continue to apply Tenant Relocation Policy CO-84 to all new development applications”. During the discussion of this motion, it was noted that, if Council wishes to consider an alternative approach to applying these policies, that the appropriate time to do so would be when each of the applications in question returns to Council for consideration.

Note: The two referenced applications (Eastleigh and Michaud) both applied at the time Policy CO-81 was in effect and therefore are grandfathered under that Policy. At a regular Council meeting, there was a motion put forward to retroactively apply the new CO-84 Policy to those applications, which was amended as noted above.

2. Re: Considering maintaining current affordable housing on site if/when possible prior to approving any redevelopment on affordable sites:

On larger sites with multi-phase development potential, staff do and would seek to maintain existing affordable housing while accommodating new development. For example, in the Langley Lions complex, the intent is for vacant areas to be developed first and have residents from the next building to be redeveloped relocated into the new buildings, to allow existing residents to stay on site while the overall complex is gradually renewed with a greater supply of affordable homes.

3. Re: Council applying inclusionary zoning:

At the December 2, 2024 Regular Council Meeting, Council passed a motion directing staff to research and provide a report back to Council on inclusionary zoning to allow it to be considered for adoption in the upcoming new Zoning Bylaw. Staff has reviewed Metro Vancouver’s inclusionary housing study and been working with a land economist consultant to inform this requested report in accordance with the Local Government Act and will present the report and its findings to Council once complete as part of the new Zoning Bylaw development process.

Therefore, it is recommended that City Council receive the AAC's report titled "Langley Seniors in Action - Loss of Affordable Rental Housing" letter for information only.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALTERNATIVE:

None provided.

Respectfully Submitted,



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

1. Langley Seniors In Action Letter, emailed on February 25, 2025
2. Accessibility Advisory Committee Report, dated April 17, 2025
3. Circu LawR, September 2023, Accessible BC Act: Overview and Implications for Organizations
4. Requirements Under Accessible BC Act for UBCM, June 2023
5. Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference