

# Report to Council



**Date:** August 28, 2017  
**File:** 1840-01  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Robert Parlane, Parks & Buildings Planning Manager  
**Subject:** Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessments

Report prepared by: Bruno Carneiro and Tanvi Patel,  
Parks and Buildings Planning Summer Students

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from Parks and Buildings Planning Manager dated August 28, 2017, with respect to the Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessments.

## **Purpose:**

To present a comprehensive report outlining the Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessments program.

## **Background:**

The City of Kelowna's Community for All Action Plan was endorsed by Council in 2016. The plan identifies areas to adapt policies, plans and programs to respond to the evolving needs of our community. This Plan includes 31 actions to help create a city that is healthy, safe, active and inclusive for seniors, children and those with diverse abilities.

Two of the City-led actions that arose from this Plan include an All Ages and Abilities Parks Assessment, and an All Ages and Abilities City Buildings Assessment, collectively called the "Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessment".

These two actions will help the City evaluate the suitability of City parks and buildings to meet the needs of seniors, young children, and those with diverse abilities. As Kelowna's population ages, mobility, accessibility and social participation becomes more challenging for many. Therefore, it is important to create public spaces that are accessible and where social connections can be made.

In 2017, the City of Kelowna received a UBCM Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant to complete these two recommendations. Led by the Parks and Buildings Planning department, assessment criteria

were created through research done on globally recognized best practice and planning documents. Additionally, stakeholder engagement was completed to take into consideration the needs of seven defined user groups that included:

- Seniors generally,
- caregivers with babies and/or toddlers,
- caregivers with adults challenged in any manner,
- people who are deaf or hard of hearing,
- people who are blind or visually impaired,
- people with cognitive, memory or learning challenges,
- and people with mobility challenges.

Through this process the assessment criteria were refined and formatted into checklists, one for parks and one for buildings.

Parks and Buildings Planning hired two summer students to complete the task of assessing City parks and buildings using the checklists. Training was provided to the summer students both by staff and by volunteers with varying experience, in order for the students to have sound knowledge of best practices, an empathetic view on each user group, and critical thinking.

The students have successfully assessed 157 parks and 76 buildings in our portfolio. The collected data will be used by Parks and Buildings Planning staff to identify priorities for improved access within City owned properties, as well as supporting future grant applications for improved access as they arise in the future.

Further, the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) reached out to the City of Kelowna over the summer to discuss their pilot program which includes accessibility audits for buildings and public spaces. Their assessments place a specific focus on those with mobility challenges, vision challenges, and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. As part of their pilot, RHF is reaching out to municipalities across Canada offering free assessments for a selection of parks and buildings. Staff is currently using our assessment to identify a number of parks and buildings for assessment by the RHF. This will complement the work done by Parks and Buildings Planning students in two ways: it will provide staff the ability to compare results from assessments done by an outside source to our own assessments, and it will provide access to new grant opportunities from RHF which would be applied to improving our parks and buildings.

The information collected in the assessments has been shared with the People in Motion Organization for their online Accessibility Inventory, which helps residents and visitors find accessible resources in the Central Okanagan. Additionally, the assessments will be shared with the other Community for All partners, so that key organizations such as Interior Health, UBCO and Okanagan College may choose to undertake similar assessments.

In order to forge a culture for all ages and abilities, it's essential that the needs of all our residents are incorporated into City planning and projects. The Community for All, Parks and Buildings Assessment is one way to demonstrate the City's leadership in building an inclusive community for all.

**Internal Circulation:**

Divisional Director, Infrastructure

Divisional Director, Active Living and Culture Park and Landscape Planner

Sustainability Coordinator

Parks Services Manager  
Buildings Services Manager  
Infrastructure Delivery, Senior Project Manager

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority:  
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:  
Existing Policy:  
Financial/Budgetary Considerations:  
Personnel Implications:  
Communications Comments:  
Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:

R. Parlane,  
Parks & Buildings Planning Manager

**Approved for inclusion:**



A. Newcombe, Divisional Director, Infrastructure

Attachments: Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessments Presentation

cc: Divisional Director, Infrastructure  
Divisional Director, Active Living and Culture  
Sustainability Coordinator  
Parks Services Manager  
Buildings Services Manager  
Infrastructure Delivery, Senior Project Manager  
Park and Landscape Planner