

MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, July 23, 2026

TIME: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

PLACE: Council Committee Room
Coquitlam City Hall
3000 Guildford Way
Coquitlam, BC

CALL TO ORDER AND TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. **Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, May 14, 2026**

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, May 14, 2026 be approved.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

2. **Accessibility and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029 (Presentation by Manisha Dutta, Senior Manager Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Kate Brown, Accessibility and Inclusion Specialist)**
7:05 - 7:35 p.m. (30 minutes)
3. **Departmental Staff Updates (Verbal Update by Jenny Lush, Director Partnerships and Planning, and Victoria Elahi, Planner 1)**
7:35 p.m. - 7:50 p.m. (15 minutes)
4. **Committee Members' Roundtable / Emerging Issues (Standing Agenda Item)**
7:50 p.m. - 8:20 p.m. (30 minutes)

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE – Thursday, September 10, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 14, 2026

A Regular Meeting of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee convened on Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 7:03 p.m. in the Council Committee Room, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

**Indicates virtual attendance*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Councillor Brent Asmundson, Chair
Parmis Bagher Zadeh, Citizen Representative
Tina Balachandran, Citizen Representative
Leo Chen, Citizen Representative
Honore Gbedze, Citizen Representative*
Ann Johannes, Citizen Representative
Bita Rezaei, Citizen Representative*
Edgar Sanchez, Citizen Representative

ABSENT: Councillor Matt Djonlic, Vice Chair (regrets)
Carolina Echeverri, Citizen Representative (regrets)
Nikki Kasravi, Citizen Representative (regrets)
Bibi Singh, Citizen Representative (regrets)
Lucie Wee, Citizen Representative (regrets)

GUESTS: Abigail Cameron, Associate Program Director Strategic Initiatives and Development, SUCCESS BC (re: item 3)

STAFF: Jenny Lush, Director Partnerships and Planning
Victoria Elahi, Social Planner
Alex McLellan, Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and provided an Indigenous territorial acknowledgement.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, March 5, 2026

The Minutes of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, March 5, 2026 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

2. Canada Day 2026

This item was addressed under item 4. Departmental Staff Updates.

Honore Gbedze entered the meeting at this point (7:06 p.m.)

NEW BUSINESS

3. Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership

The Associate Program Director Strategic Initiatives and Development from SUCCESS gave a presentation entitled “Emerging Immigrant Needs” and referred to slides contained in the Agenda package.

Discussion ensued relative to a planned employment forum for newcomers, including:

- Suggestion to include organizations that assist in recognition and communication of skills and education attained in newcomers’ countries of origin (ex. Douglas College).
- Suggestions to address cultural differences in business practices and language skills that may not match technical skills.
- Suggestion to prioritize networking given the challenging job market and difficulty to secure consideration of applications, and particularly sector specific and with former newcomers who have who have built skills in navigating systems, have understanding, and can provide confidence.
- Suggestion to provide assistance in securing childcare and navigating the school system, as these are key considerations for parents entering the workforce.
- Concern that when employment is unavailable or inaccessible positive community integration may be diminished leading to higher cost social issues.
- Suggestion for collaboration among employment agencies to identify key stakeholders and economic trends and plans in order to address proactively the needs of job seekers.
- Suggestion to target efforts towards audiences in specific professions, particularly those that are regulated.
- Consideration of the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) in recruiting practices and changing job demands and suggestion for related skill-building activities.

4. Departmental Staff Updates

The Director Partnerships and Planning gave a verbal update regarding the Welcome to Coquitlam and Canada Day 2026 events.

- The focus of the Community Services department will be on hosting the Welcome to Coquitlam event
- There will not be a Community Services booth at the Canada Day event.
- Welcome to Coquitlam will take place on Wednesday, June 17, 2026 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at City Hall and the immediate surrounding area.
- Welcome to Coquitlam will be focused, easy to navigate, and family-friendly; feature City departments, public service providers, immigrant and community services organizations, sports organizations, and volunteer organizations; and offer activities in Buchanan Square, an interactive world map to identify countries of origin, and a scavenger hunt involving surrounding city facilities.
- Members of this Committee are encouraged to volunteer in a range of capacities and to share event and volunteering information with their networks.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Opportunities to secure translation support including SUCCESS BC and Immigrant Services Society, who may bring English language students; Douglas College who may provide American Sign Language students; and the schools to identify youth who may have experience translating for immigrant parents.

5. Committee Members' Roundtable / Multicultural Communities and Emerging Issues (Standing Agenda Item)

The Chair invited Committee members to share emerging issues and information regarding events occurring in their communities.

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE – Thursday, July 23, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Councillor Brent Asmundson, Chair

Alex McLellan, Committee Clerk

City of Coquitlam
Corporate Services Department

Accessibility and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029

Multiculturalism Advisory Committee
July 23, 2026



Purpose of Today's Presentation

Share the final
**Accessibility and Inclusion
Plan 2026-2029** and
highlight **key features**.

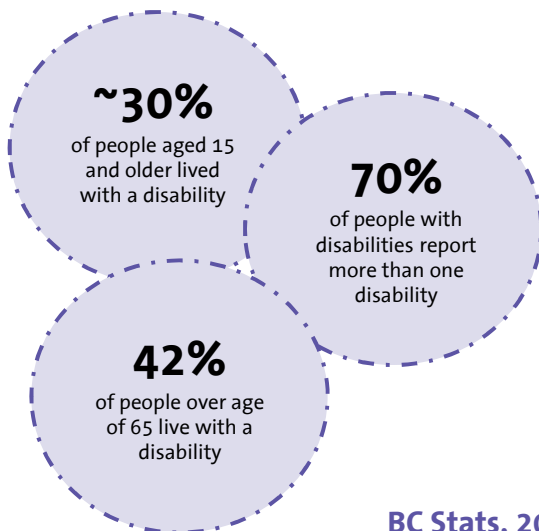
Highlight how **community
engagement** and **advisory
committee feedback**
informed the Plan.



Background - Legislative Context



Background - Community Context



Background - Community Context

~30%

of people aged 15
and older lived
with a disability

70%

of people with
disabilities report
more than one
disability

42%

of people over age
of 65 live with a
disability

BC Stats, 2024

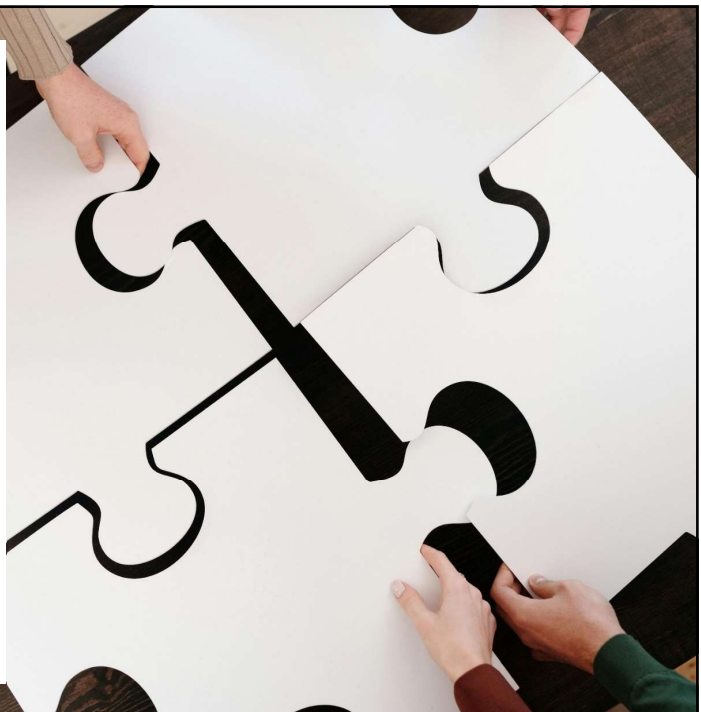
~43,000
residents live with
at least one
disability



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Shaping the Plan



Who did we hear from?



- **Public survey** with over half of responses from individuals identifying as having a disability or accessibility-related need



- Workshops with **service providers** supporting community members with accessibility and inclusion needs.



- One-on-one and small group discussions with **residents**
- **Youth**-focused sessions with Coquitlam Youth Council and local Secondary School inclusion program
- Coquitlam **Advisory Committees**



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Diverse, Lived Experiences Shaped Plan

What We Heard:

Fostering belonging and understanding – by emphasizing respectful, accessible service delivery and increased awareness of diverse needs across the community.

Delivering inclusive programs and services – highlighting the opportunities for continued flexible, accessible programming that meets a range of ages, schedules and support requirements.

Designing accessible public spaces – applying accessible design principles to public infrastructure and facilities.

Improving transportation networks – emphasizing the importance of safe, reliable and well-connected transportation infrastructure

Enhancing information and communication – plain language, accessible materials, and feedback options.

Neighbourhood design and connectivity – proactively integrating accessibility and inclusion into community planning to support connectivity.



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Plan Overview

- Six **focus areas** stemming from provincial legislation
- Goals advance the **long-term vision** of the Plan
- Actions based on **feedback, emerging practices**
- Intended to be **flexible and balanced**



Key Feature - Actions Informed by Feedback

Strengthening What We've Built

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Goal: Provide clear and accessible information through City communication channels and digital platforms.

Coquitlam's information and communication channels play a critical role in how people access services, participate in city life and stay informed. Making these channels and their supporting technology accessible and inclusive enables residents with diverse abilities and backgrounds to engage fully with the City.

Our Work in Action

- Translation from City website languages
- Accessible communication guidelines and City of Coquitlam Identity & Style Handbook
- City website WCAG 2.0 compliance, including the accessible technology
- Technology support and training for staff and the public

Actions

1. Enhance the accessibility of internal and external facing: technology, digital platforms, websites, documentation, communications, and publications.
2. Assess opportunities to expand plain language, multilingual and accessible communication supports where most impactful and feasible.
3. Examine current emergency and crisis communication methods and find opportunities for enhancements that promote messages reaching people in accessible, inclusive ways.
4. Establish a centralized resource section to provide staff with guidance, best practices, and tips on inclusive day-to-day communications such as: emails, memos and reports.

- 24 total Actions
- 1 overarching Action
- Actions support **enhancements** in accessibility

Key Feature – Example Outcomes

Strengthening What We've Built

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Goal: Provide clear and accessible information through City communication channels and digital platforms.

Coquitlam information and communication channels play a critical role in how people access services, participate in civic life and stay informed. Making these channels and their supporting technology accessible and inclusive enables residents with diverse abilities and languages to engage fully with the City.

Our Work in Action

- Inclusive features on City's website to meet 40 languages
- Accessible communication guidelines integrated into Department's Visual Identity & Graphic System
- City website meets WCAG 2.0 standards, ensuring accessibility, including for those using assistive technologies
- Technology upgrades provide residents accessible tools that support staff who are hard of hearing or using and enhance needed service delivery

Actions	Example Outcomes
1. Enhance the accessibility of internal and external facing technology, digital platforms, websites, documentation, communications, and publications.	Residents and staff experience user-friendly digital platforms. Website updates, forms, and wayfinding materials improve navigation and readability for diverse users.
2. Assess opportunities to expand plain language, multilingual and accessible communication supports where most impactful and feasible.	Public information is clearer and more accessible, and City updates and initiatives reach more residents, reducing barriers for people with disabilities, neurodivergence, limited English proficiency, and varying literacy levels.
3. Examine current emergency and crisis communication methods and find opportunities for enhancements that promote messages reaching people in accessible, inclusive ways.	Emergency alerts and crisis information are clear, delivered through accessible formats, and further aligned with diverse community needs.
4. Establish a centralized resource section to provide staff with guidance, best practices, and tips on inclusive digital communications such as emails, reports and reports.	Staff use practical tools such as inclusive language guidelines, templates and checklists leading to more consistent, accessible and inclusive communications across the organization.

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Example Outcomes

Residents and staff experience user-friendly digital platforms. Website updates, forms, and wayfinding materials improve navigation and readability for diverse users.

Public information is clearer and more accessible, and City updates and initiatives reach more residents, reducing barriers for people with disabilities, neurodivergence, limited English proficiency, and varying literacy levels.

Emergency alerts and crisis information are clear, delivered through accessible formats, and further aligned with diverse community needs.

Staff use practical tools such as inclusive language guidelines, templates and checklists leading to more consistent, accessible and inclusive communications across the organization.

Example outcomes included to help **visualize and guide work** in each focus area

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Key Feature – Community Collaboration

Strengthening What We've Built

What Can You Do?

Accessibility and inclusion enhancements benefit everyone. Each of us has a role in creating a welcoming and barrier-free community. In addition to each of the actions noted in the Plan, here are some actions you can undertake to help support accessibility and inclusion in our community.



Use inclusive practices in daily interactions—be patient, avoid assumptions, and communicate in clear, respectful ways.



Participate in engagement opportunities by sharing your experiences and ideas to help shape a more accessible and inclusive community.



Report barriers you encounter in City spaces, services, or online tools so we can improve accessibility for everyone.



Support inclusive community spaces by encouraging others to use accessible features appropriately and promoting respectful, welcoming behaviour in shared environments.

“What Can You Do?” section invites the community to contribute to **enhancing accessibility inclusion** in collaborative manner

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Giving Feedback and Staying Connected

Multiple ways to provide feedback

Plan available for viewing in-person at **City Hall and online**

Plain Language Version created to support accessibility



Online

An online Accessibility Feedback Form is available 24/7 on the City's website at coquitlam.ca/accessibility.



Email

Email EDI@coquitlam.ca with your feedback or to request support to fill out the Accessibility Feedback Form.



Phone

Call City Hall at 604-927-3000 and ask to be directed to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion staff. A staff member will help you submit the Accessibility Feedback Form on your behalf.



In person

Visit City Hall at 3000 Guildford Way. An Equity, Diversity and Inclusion staff member will help you to fill in Accessibility Feedback Form on your behalf. City Hall is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., excluding statutory holidays.

Moving Forward

- Implementation will take place over the Plan's **three-year cycle**
- Action items are to align with **Business Plan priorities**
- A collaborative approach enables integration into City operations through **planned reviews, upgrades and renewals**



Thank you! Questions?

EDI@coquitlam.ca

Find the full Plan at
coquitlam.ca/Accessibility

    
coquitlam.ca/EDI

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