
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 12, 2007

File No.: 5030-20

To: City Manager

From: Community Planning Manager

Subject: Proposed Council Policy: Accessibility Measures for Hotels and Motels

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council adopt the attached draft Council policy to provide recommended accessibility measures for incorporation by hotels and motels on a voluntary basis as an educational resource in addition to the application of the Building Code to new development.

BACKGROUND:

At its meeting of June 11, 2006, Council authorized staff to bring back a report and draft Council Policy to introduce design guidelines for hotels and motels to improve their accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities is a statutory committee of Council intended to be representative of many types of disabilities. The Committee undertook the initiative in 2007 to review the needs of people with disabilities when they are staying in hotels or motels. Members understood that there are requirements in the Building Code, but were of the opinion that many times, these measures don't go far enough and don't necessarily address the needs of all disabilities. They met with Stan Martindale of the Hotel and Motel Association to discuss these concepts and also met with the architect for the new Hampton Inn that is under construction at the southwest corner of Powick Rd. and Highway 97 (1655-1659 Powick Rd.). This was a positive meeting and the architect was receptive to the suggestions of the Committee members. In fact, the Committee have been invited to tour the new hotel on June 5th, 2007 to review the design measures that have been undertaken to incorporate accessibility. Stan Martindale has reviewed the draft hotel/motel policy with the members of the Hotel/Motel Association. The Association advises that it wishes to address the needs of its customers and that the guidelines would be applied on a property by property basis, as needed. They will be useful in addressing specific concerns regarding individual hotels or motels. The Committee also met with Building staff to determine how the Building Code is applied.

Since then, the suggestions of the Committee have been reviewed by staff in comparison with the newly revised B.C. Building Code and have asked that a Council Policy be drafted. The draft policy is attached to this report. It identifies the design measures recommended by the Committee and confirms which ones are already in the Building Code. The design measures have been reviewed by building and planning staff as well as the Clerk's department and the consensus is that a Council Policy is in fact the best means of introducing these measures. Building Code requirements can only be implemented for new construction, not retroactively to buildings that already exist. Building Code requirements also change over time and have recently been re-written. The Committee's wish is that

hotels and motels would voluntarily undertake to incorporate as many of the recommended accessibility measures as possible in order to improve their service to clients with disabilities. It was also noted that Kelowna is actively pursuing athletics events for people with disabilities and this, along with an aging population, means that people with disabilities will need to be accommodated by the hotel and motel industry.

City staff agreed that design measures should not be enforced in a regulatory manner over and above what is already required in the Building Code, but that education and encouragement would be offered to the hotel and motel industry by adopting accessibility guidelines for their buildings as a Council Policy. Representatives of the Hotel/Motel Association have positively received this information as a way to improve their service.

INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:

City Clerk

Building and By-law Enforcement

Planning and Development Services

LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

Council Resolution

LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

This is a voluntary guiding document. It does not have legal or statutory requirements that would exceed the Building Code or any City regulations.

EXISTING POLICY:

Accessibility policies in Chapter 17 of the OCP.

FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no financial or budgetary considerations.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:

The policy does not give rise to the need for more staff.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

The proposal is an educational council policy to advise on technical building measures that can be incorporated to improve the accessibility of hotels and motels for people with disabilities.

EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Representatives of the Hotel/Motel Association have positively received this information as a way to improve their service. The Committee met with Stan Martindale of the Hotel and Motel Association to discuss these concepts. The Hotel and Motel Association has now reviewed the draft policy and advised that they have no objections, but that the guidelines would have to be considered on a property by property basis. The Association also advised, as follows: *"While we recognize the varying needs of different people, we are also dealing with varying age and structures. Each property will have different challenges in implementing the recommendations."* They also expressed that as a customer-service based industry, they value the feedback from the community of people with disabilities and would definitely consider improvements to individual properties, based on the guidelines.

The Committee also met with the architect for the new Marriott Hotel at the southwest corner of Powick Rd. and Highway 97 (1655-1659 Powick Rd.). This was a positive meeting and the architect was receptive to the suggestions of the Committee members. In fact, the Committee and some guests took part in a tour of the new hotel on June 5th, 2007 to review the design measures that have been undertaken to incorporate accessibility. Information gained will be used in a second motel project in the vicinity of Powick Rd..

Considerations that were not applicable to this report:

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION:

Submitted by:

T. Eichler, Community Planning Manager

Approved for Inclusion:



DS

Cc: Building Inspections Manager
Inspections Services Manager
Current Planning Manager
Director of Planning and Development Services

Electronic Attachments: Draft Council Policy - Accessibility Measures for Hotels and Motels
Email from Stan Martindale:



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COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

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APPROVAL DATE:
RESOLUTION #:
REPLACING #:
DATE OF LAST REVIEW:

SUBJECT: Accessibility Measures for Hotels and Motels

Parking:

Physical Disabilities:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Accessible pedestrian route from handicapped parking spaces to accessible entrance
- Access aisles from parking stalls should connect to the accessible route to the building entrance
- Vertical signage to designate handicapped accessible parking stalls

Additional Recommendations:

- Extra wide stalls should be available for lift-equipped vans so adequate space is there for the lift and the wheelchair user to exit and enter the vehicle.
- Parking spaces and access aisles shall be level with surface slopes not exceeding 2% in all directions.

Main Entrance:

Physical Disabilities:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Automatic (push button) or sliding doors
- Level and clear doorways
- Door hardware that is easy to grasp with one hand and does not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.

General:

Additional Recommendations:

- A list of the availability of properly equipped rooms should be provided on the internet (hotel web site).

Physical Disabilities:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- A portion of the check-in counter that is lowered where a person checks in is a desirable feature for those in wheelchairs or short people.



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SUBJECT: Accessibility Measures for Hotels and Motels

Hearing Impairment:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Fire alarms that are strobe lights for each floor.

Additional Recommendations:

- Lobbies should have video phones
- For the deaf – TTY access should be easily available at the lobby
- Permanent locations on each floor for TTY and video phones should be established

Visual Impairment:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Clear headroom for those who are blind or have low vision.
- Braille and embossed lettering (large print) must be provided on elevators, hotel information signs, room numbers on doors and bathrooms of rooms that are designated for accessibility for those with disabilities
- Signs on the walls of each floor (near elevator) to identify the floor
- Tactile strips to indicate stair locations
- Contrast colour strips at the edge of steps

Additional Recommendations:

- Braille and embossed lettering (large print) room numbers on doors of all rooms so that those who are visually impaired can determine if they have reached the right room, whether they are staying in the room or visiting someone else in that room;
- Bells in the elevator should be provided to indicate each floor
- Signage for people who are blind or have low vision are trained to look in a consistent location for tactile signs. They cannot find the sign if it is not mounted in the correct location.



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SUBJECT: Accessibility Measures for Hotels and Motels

Hotel Rooms:

Physical Disabilities:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Follow some of the design principles of barrier-free homes, especially location of light switches and

doorway widths

- Doors wide enough with lever handles or easy opening preferred.

Additional Recommendations:

- Flooring that has no underlay, is securely fixed or is of a material that is easy to manoeuvre around on in a wheelchair or walker.
- Spacious area, free of heavy furniture,
- A bed that is the right height for the individual that must transfer from wheelchair to bed,
- Adequate room underneath bed to accommodate ceiling lift ;
- Ceiling track lifts for bed transfer
- Mechanism to use with the ceiling track lift should be available at the front desk so that folks don't have to travel with bulky, portable devices
- Curtains that can be pulled from a wheelchair sitting position,
- A telephone beside the bed,
- Light switches which are low-effort such as touch control or rocker panel.
- Closets with lighting and two different heights of clothes rods.
- Windows that can be opened from the inside with one hand or a closed fist.

Hotel Room Bathroom:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Good size bath benches, hand held shower extension, anti-scald features, grab bars in the shower. Note that fold-down seats are sometimes too small to sit on and may be questionable in terms of cleanliness. Any seats must be in good condition with no cracks.
- Non-slip tile
- Toilets with solid raised toilet seats or the high toilets with grab bars at the back and on the side wall by the
- toilet.



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- Vanity with opening under sink, water pipes wrapped with material so a person doesn't burn their legs as a lot of people who are paralyzed cannot feel hot & cold.

- Lever handles on sink for those with minimal strength.

Additional Recommendations:

- Roll-in showers with no lip, just sloped entrance
- Adequate access to both sides of the toilet
- Location of faucet handles should be closer to the front of counters;

Hearing Impairment:

BC Building Code Requirements:

- Strobe light in rooms identified as handicapped accessible for fire alarm

Additional Recommendations:

- Doorbell should activate a light inside the room
- Internet access so email can be used in the rooms
- Strobe lights for fire alarm in every room. (people with hearing impairment may not need other handicapped accessible features);
 - Alternatively (or additionally), vibrating devices to serve as an alarm, especially for the beds, as some people will not wake up for a light.
- Contact lists for local associations for the hearing impaired should be provided
- Additional equipment for hearing impaired guests (TTY and video phones)
- TV with closed captioning.

REASON FOR POLICY: Council appointed an Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities in 2006. The Committee undertook work in 2007 to devise guidelines for hotels and motels to better accommodate people with disabilities. Some of the measures are already required in the BC Building Code and these measures are identified. However, the Building Code only applies in new construction requiring a building permit. Proper design for disabilities is strongly encouraged in existing and new construction.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: Council Resolution

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION: In policy