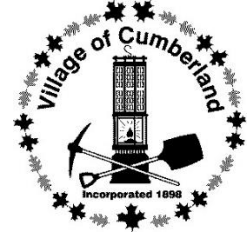


Accessibility and Inclusion Select Committee
Agenda
July 17, 2023 at 3 p.m.
Council Chamber, 2675 Dunsmuir Avenue



1. Approval of Agenda

2. Adoption of Minutes: May 15, 2023 3

3. Presentations

3.1 Adaptive Trails, United Riders of Cumberland,
Dougal Browne, Executive Director, and Adam Spiegel, UROC Board Chair

3.2 Financial Access to Regional Recreation 6
Ryan Parton, Interim Manager of Parks & Recreation, Village of
Cumberland

Resident families and individuals who are working low-income, on BC benefits and/or whose family pre-tax income does not exceed the Statistics Canada Low-Income Measure (see [application](#) for cut-offs) are eligible for these programs, which are described below.

FAIR: Available exclusively to Village of Cumberland residents, the FAIR program offers qualifying residents a credit of \$350 per calendar year that can be used toward a 50% discount on any registered program(s).

LEAP: Qualifying Comox Valley residents are eligible for 52 free admissions in *each* of the four jurisdictions (Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland and the CVRD). Details can be found in the application form below.

3. Unfinished Business – For Discussion

3.1 Review and Update of Committee Work Plan 8

- June meeting with the Cumberland Business Association
- <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/resources/unconscious-bias.html>

3.2 Regional Accessibility Framework: Referral for Feedback 11

May 8, 2023 Council resolution:

That Council participate in the collaborative development of a regional accessibility framework provided that socio-economic and political inclusion and diversity are not excluded by the framework and enter into an agreement with Comox Valley Social Planning Society for the

services of a regional Accessibility Committee along with other regional local government partners.

The Village is participating in the collaborative development of a regional accessibility framework as a collaborative overarching guidance document. The draft framework is being presented to the Cumberland Committee and the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee for feedback, then it will be presented to local governments in September.

Once the framework is completed in fall 2023, each local government will develop its own accessibility assessments and action plans, which Council will discuss during 2024 budget development.

References:

- [Accessible British Columbia Act](#)
- [Developing Your Own Accessibility Plan, A Guide for Prescribed Organizations, Disability Alliance BC](#)

5.4 Official Community Plan review

- Consultation with committee likely at September meeting

5.5 Transportation Master Plan review

- Register at connectcumberland.ca for updates

5. New Business

6. Reports from committee members

- DABC grant program for community accessibility projects:
<https://disabilityalliancebc.org/program/accessibility-projects/>

7. Upcoming meetings: Third Monday every second month.

September 11, 2023 at 3 p.m.

- Official Community Plan review consultation

November 20, 2023

8. Adjournment

**The Corporation of the Village of Cumberland
Accessibility and Inclusion Select Committee Minutes**



**May 15, 2023 at 3 p.m.
Council Chamber, 2675 Dunsmuir Avenue**

Members Present:

Judy Norbury, chair
Brenda Lenahan
Suzanna Wong
Jaye Mathieu
Rhianna Walz
Troy Therrien, Councillor

Staff Present:

Rachel Parker, Corporate Officer

Ms. Norbury called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

- 1. Approval of Agenda: Jaye/Troy approval. Carried**
- 2. Adoption of Minutes: Rhianna/Troy: March 20, 2023. Carried**
- 3. Unfinished Business – For Discussion**
 - 3.1 Review and Update of Committee Work Plan
 - CBA resources
 - Alternative to business owners
 - Old post office building – ramp accesses non-lease area. Reach out to owner for awareness, handrail and ramp suggestion.
 - Suzanna to reach out to business owners and Old post office building owner
 - Actions for business owners as well.
 - Look at reprinting brochure – budget and redistribute with business licences and property tax notices – look at SPARC grant
 - Rhianna to check on CBA mapping project, Suzanna to hand out.
 - Invite UROC reps (Dougal and Adam) on adaptive mountain biking, whether building to existing standards

Discussion took place on the Comox Valley Social planning Society accessibility audit through the Community Health Network, and whether a representative from the Village will participate.

- 3.2 2023 Committee Budget
 - Training: \$1500 – explore any training or learning opportunities for the Committee – Rachel to explore inclusion training – Canadian govt gender and unconscious bias. Share links.
 - Meeting costs: \$100
- 3.3 Facility and Infrastructure Accessibility Review – Monitor and support recommendations
 - Noted that an accessibility lens into the grant and funding stage of project is beneficial

4. Unfinished Business – For Information

- 4.1 Road and Pedestrian Improvements Design: 2023 Capital Project - First Street, Dunsmuir to Penrith
 - One reserved parking space in design, request second reserved space.

5. New Business

- 5.1 Official Community Plan review and Transportation Master Plan, Plan Your Community Street Event - May 24, 2023, 12 Noon to 7pm on Third Steet Connect Cumberland engagement platform:
<https://connectcumberland.ca/>
- 5.2 Regional Accessibility Framework:
 - Discussion on Cumberland representation on the regional Accessibility Committee, Judy is member of regional committee.
 - Concern that regional committee do not represent local knowledge of community committee.

The Village is participating in the collaborative development of a regional accessibility framework, which may be referred to the Committee at the July meeting.

The Village will also enter into an agreement along with other regional local government partners for the Comox Valley Social Planning Society for the services of a regional Accessibility Committee along to meet the Accessible BC Act requirements for an accessibility plan and a committee that meets the membership composition required by section 9 of the Accessible BC Act:

Once the framework is completed this fall, each local government will develop its own accessibility assessments and action plans, which Council will discuss during 2024 budget development.

6. Reports from committee members

- Suzanna: invitation to new members, self identify Indigenous and LGBTQ+, to expand inclusion
- Discussion on members to regional accessible committee

7. Upcoming meetings: Third Monday every second month.

- July 17, 2023 at 3 p.m.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

2023 Financial Access to CV Recreation Services

Please check off which program(s) you are applying for (flip the page for individual program details):

	LEAP - Leisure for Everyone Accessibility Program Available to residents of Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland and/or residents of Areas A, B, C of the Comox Valley Regional District
	RAP - Recreation Access Program City of Courtenay residents only
	TRIP - Inclusion Program Town of Comox residents only
	FAIR – Village of Cumberland Village of Cumberland residents only

Please list the names of all family members residing in your household that require financial assistance for recreation.

NAMES (First & Last)	AGE	BIRTH DATE <small>(i.e. Jan. 7, 2022)</small>	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY BCID/BC SERVICES CARD CONFIRMED
Primary Account Holder			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

ADDRESS	
CITY/TOWN	POSTAL CODE
PHONE	EMAIL

You are eligible to receive discounts when your **combined gross family income** is below the following after taxes (net income):

Statistics Canada Low Income Measure (LIM)							
# in Household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 & over
Income Under	\$26,570	\$37,576	\$46,021	\$53,140	\$59,412	\$65,083	\$70,298

DECLARATION/CONSENT/SIGNATURE OF PRIMARY ACCOUNT HOLDER

I declare that my combined family income (includes my income and spouse or common-law partner, if applicable) currently is estimated per year at \$_____. If requested, I agree to meet with a representative of the CVRD, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox or Village of Cumberland and will at that time disclose financial information based on my Notice of Assessment from the previous year. I also give the above organizations permission to share the information on this form with each other in order to be eligible for LEAP/RAP/TRIP.

I verify all of the information I have provided on this form is accurate and true:

Signature of Primary Account Holder

Date

Program Details & Administration Information

CHECKLIST – Applicants MUST bring the following (or an adjudicator will be required):	FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Completed Application	
Proof of COMOX VALLEY Residency (<i>Rent receipt or utility bill in the name of the applicant</i>)	
BC ID or BC Services Cards for Each Family Member	

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications may be processed at:

- 1) City of Courtenay Florence Filberg Centre - 411 Anderton Ave., Courtenay
- 2) City of Courtenay Lewis Centre - 489 Old Island Hwy., Courtenay
- 3) CVRD Aquatic Centre – 377 Lerwick Rd., Courtenay
- 4) CVRD Sports Centre – 3001 Vanier Drive, Courtenay
- 5) Town of Comox Community Centre – 1855 Noel Ave., Comox
- 6) Village of Cumberland Recreation Centre – 2665 Dunsmuir Ave., Cumberland

You may bring your completed application, with supporting documentation, anytime during operating hours to one of the above recreation facilities. A customer service representative will verify your information and then process your application. You will be contacted via phone or email when your recreation cards are ready for pick up (from the same facility that you dropped your application off). To activate your membership at the other organizations please present your ID and obtain your additional recreation cards (your application will be on file with each agency). As soon as you have your cards you can start using your discounts at any of the recreation facilities listed above. Please note each family member will need to be onsite to get their picture at each of the organizations they wish to have a recreation card and they will need to bring their ID the first time.

LEAP BENEFITS FOR ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

LEAP has been designed to provide healthy lifestyle opportunities to residents of the Comox Valley who face financial challenges.

- 1) 52 free admissions per calendar year for each family member to drop-in programs/services/activities at each organization (CVRD, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland). This means each family member can have up to 208 free drop-ins per year.
- 2) 1 free registered program per year plus an additional 4 registered programs at 50% off per family member per year at CVRD recreation facilities.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SPECIFIC BENEFITS – Comox, Courtenay & Cumberland

- 1) Town of Comox (TRIP Program) – Comox Residents receive \$250 per year towards 50% discount on non-contract programs and Fitness Studio memberships.
- 2) City of Courtenay (RAP Program) – Courtenay Residents receive the following: Adults: 50% up to the annual amount of \$350, Youth: 75% up to the annual amount of \$400, Children: 75% up to the annual amount of \$450.
- 3) Village of Cumberland (FAIR Program) – Cumberland residents receive \$350 per year toward a 50% discount on registered programs.

ADJUDICATOR INFORMATION (if required)

If you are unable to provide proof of income or residency, we will accept your application if signed by a recognized adjudicator. This can include a professional in social work or family services, a school principal or counsellor, a senior recreation administrator, a healthcare professional, a spiritual leader, a lawyer or notary public, a housing assistant or support advocate.

The individual endorsing this form below should be familiar with the applicant's financial situation as their signature verifies the financial need of the family/individual.

Name: _____ Organization: _____ Position: _____

I have thoroughly read and understand the guidelines of the LEAP/RAP/TRIP Programs and agree that the Household Income of this applicant is such that they require financial assistance in order to access recreation opportunities and that they live in the Comox Valley. If required I agree to participate in a brief telephone follow-up interview for verification. I can be reached at the following number at the following time(s).

Phone: _____ Good time(s) to call: _____

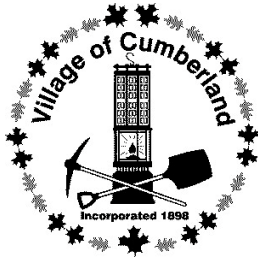
Signature of Adjudicator

Date

Official Stamp

OFFICE USE ONLY

Processed by: _____ Date: _____



Corporation of the Village of Cumberland

2673 Dunsmuir Avenue
P.O. Box 340
Cumberland, BC V0R 1S0
Telephone: 250-336-2291
Fax: 250-336-2321
cumberland.ca

File No. 0540-20

Jan 9 2023

Accessibility and Inclusion Committee - Work Plan

	Approved Task	Status	Next Steps
1.	To make recommendations to Council on a strategy to encourage and support owners of existing public and commercial buildings in making accessibility improvements to the built environment and to create environments that are inclusive to all community members.	In progress	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribution by mail through business licence data – Completed 2019 2. hand deliver to downtown businesses – completed 2019 3. Recognize accessibility improvements at 2019 June Accessibility Day 4. Liaised with business community through CBA -shared brochure at board meeting in June 2023 5. Liaise with CBA on mapping project to identify accessible businesses
2.	Review of community event manual with recommendations to make events more accessible; and outreach with special event coordinators.	Complete	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review Community Event Manual - completed 2. Make recommendations for staff review – completed 3. Outreach with event coordinators spring 2020 once new manual available – delayed by COVID restrictions 4. Create Checklist for event organizers – complete
3.	Consult with emergency planning staff on accessibility and inclusion and provide resources on emergency preparedness.	Complete	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Met with regional emergency support services: Sep 24 2018 2. April 15 2019 tour of emergency reception centres: CRI & CC 3. Provided communication boards to CVEP ESS in 2019
4.	Explore and investigate accessible tourism, and parks and trails mapping	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rick Hansen rating complete for South Colliery Trails and Chinatown Walking tour • Trails Coordinator to undertake adaptive MTB trail assessment and

	<p><i>The Facility and Infrastructure Accessibility Review</i> recommendations:</p> <p>a) Continue to identify two or three potential pilot sites to help to expand the current network of accessible trails</p> <p>b) Consider developing trail profiles similar to the approach adopted by the Capital Regional District and make this information available at the local tourist office.</p>		<p>feasibility – 2018: An a-MTB trail requires a specific type of terrain that may not exist on Village property and may impact CCF covenant. For private land, UROC would need capacity to be partner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brenda to explore Access by Design • Invite UROC to meeting? Re: adaptive mountain biking trails.
5.	Recognize businesses and community members who are engaging in efforts to make Cumberland a more inclusive and accessible place to live and visit.	In Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with CBA to recognize businesses for a fall 2022 target date • Revisit in fall 2023 – connect with CBA.
6.	Monitor and support recommendations of the 2016 Facility and Infrastructure Review	In Progress	See buildings and facilities tracking sheet.

7.	To promote social and political equity as follows:		
	Identify barriers to social inclusion and accessibility and make recommendations as to how to remove these barriers;		- Work on this in the future
	Identify best practices in other communities and make recommendations based on the findings to promote social and political equity;		- Work on this in the future
	Participate in reviewing the Village of Cumberland's draft plans, policies and procedures to prevent the creation of barriers in the future;		
	Draft a strategy for engaging with the community on issues relating to accessibility and inclusiveness;		
	Work with Council to increase public awareness on issues related to accessibility and inclusion for all citizen		



Comox Valley Local Governments Accessibility Framework

-





Collaboration to identify, eliminate and prevent accessibility barriers (draft July 2023)

DRAFT

1) Introduction

Persons living with disabilities deserve access to the use and benefit of local government services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity and that is equitable in relation to the broader public.

The Comox Valley local government partners are taking deliberate steps to create connected, accessible and inclusive communities that promote well-being and belonging. Services should be welcoming and obtainable to people of all abilities and this commitment is reflected through the creation of this collaborative framework. This framework endeavors to identify, eliminate and prevent accessibility barriers.

<p>Accessibility is: the degree to which a product, service, program or environment is available to be accessed or used by all.</p> <p>Barrier: anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons living with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical • Architectural • Attitudinal • Technological 	<p>Equity is: the policy or practice of treating everyone fairly by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledging each unique situation and individual • accounting for the differences in each individual's starting point • ensuring equal opportunity • allocating the <i>exact</i> resources or support, <i>based on the need</i> of the individual that is required to reach an equal outcome 	<p>Inclusion is: the practice or policy of including and integrating all people and groups especially those who have been historically excluded, suffer discrimination or are living with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusion is a universal human right. • the extent to which a person feels a sense of belonging and value within a given setting 	<p>Belonging is: a feeling of being happy and comfortable as part of a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a positive relationship with other members of a group because they welcome you and accept you as you are • belonging is one of the most basic human needs and is crucial for good mental health
<p>The aim of accessibility is to consider whether a program, service or environment can be used by everyone however they may encounter it.</p>	<p>The aim of equity is to ensure that every person has access to equal benefits and/or outcomes based on the specific needs of that individual.</p>	<p>The aim of inclusion is to create, foster and sustain conditions that allow every person to be fully themselves, feel accepted and be treated equally.</p>	<p>The aim of belonging is to create space for people to feel safe, seen, accepted, valued and connected.</p>
			

Shifting preconceived attitudes regarding equity, inclusion and belonging requires self-reflection, education, awareness, commitment and planning. This framework focuses on a

systematic and coordinated approach to reduce barriers that will benefit communities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people living with disabilities. The framework is collaborative; however, some actions will be aligned to each individual jurisdiction. These actions will be pursued as resources permit and as opportunities arise and will evolve and be adjusted as each community's capacity for understanding accessibility grows.

Our Accessibility Commitment

This framework has also been made possible through the support, insights and expertise of accessibility experts. Contributions of this knowledge and perspectives of people with lived experience of disability is essential and these voices will be included in community planning and decision-making. Local government elected officials and staff are aware of their roles in influencing accessibility and support positive community attitudes.

2) Guiding Direction

The purpose of the Comox Valley Accessibility Framework is to create systemic processes that provide an opportunity for community led feedback to Comox Valley Local Governments in an effort to promote social and political equity within existing and proposed plans, policies, bylaws and infrastructure. Further, the Framework will encourage recommendations to ensure that local government actions and investments are inclusive and accommodating to citizens of all ages, abilities and walks of life.

This Framework acknowledges that many Local Government programs, services, and infrastructure have been introduced over time, without full consideration of how these measures may affect people with different disabilities. This Framework will seek to assist local government in identifying opportunities to treat everyone fairly by acknowledging their unique situation and addressing systemic barriers with the aim of ensuring that everyone has access to equal benefits and outcomes. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to accessibility so the following principles will be considered when addressing systemic barriers in the Comox Valley:

- **Inclusion:** All people must be able to take part in the community with individual autonomy and choice.
- **Adaptability:** Services will need to change as accessibility services, technology, and attitudes change.
- **Diversity:** All people are respected for their differences and lived experiences. Including disabilities/abilities, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, and immigration status.
- **Collaboration and Engagement:** Accessibility is a group responsibility. Local Governments need to work with all stakeholders to end barriers and build an accessible society.

- Intersectionality: Understanding some people are discriminated against in more than one way. Classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, trans-antagonism, ageism, and ableism are more harmful when combined.
- Respect: Treating all people with respect and dignity for a community focused on positive mental health.

The participants in this framework will endeavor to:

- Identify barriers to inclusion and accessibility and make recommendations as to how to remove and prevent these barriers;
- Identify best practices in other communities and make recommendations based on the findings to promote social and political equity;
- Participate in reviewing Comox Valley Local Government draft plans, policies and procedures to prevent the creation of barriers in the future;
- Assist in developing a strategy for engaging with the community on issues relating to accessibility and inclusiveness;
- Review documents such as the region's Regional Growth Strategy, Official Community Plans, Zoning bylaws and other policies to identify opportunities to support the related policies;
- Discuss other issues referred to the Committee by the Councils or Chief Administrative Officers of the valley.
- Work with Elected Officials to increase public awareness on issues related to accessibility and inclusion for all citizens.

3) About the Committees

The Comox Valley is privileged to boast two community-based committees focused on accessibility and inclusion. The Village of Cumberland's Accessibility and Inclusion Committee and the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee (the "Accessibility Committee") have served as a resource to local governments and the broader community promoting equity, social inclusion and accessibility through a variety of activities. The contributions and longstanding work of these individuals, striving for a more accessible community, is gratefully acknowledged.

In accordance with the statutory requirements of the *Accessible British Columbia Act* and through collaboration with the Comox Valley Social Planning Society, a formal relationship and structure has been established between the local governments and the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee. Under this arrangement the Accessibility Committee will provide advice and assist the local government in an ongoing capacity with the development and update of action plans and assessments in accordance with this framework.

Through the terms of reference for the Accessibility Committee the selection of accessibility committee members must, to the extent possible, be in accordance with the following objectives:

- At least half the members are persons with disabilities, or individuals who support or are from organizations that support persons with disabilities;
- Members reflect a diversity of persons with disabilities;
- At least one member is an Indigenous person; and
- Members reflect the diversity of persons in British Columbia

The local governments and the Accessibility Committee express their mutual desire to achieve meaningful progress and action through this ongoing relationship and collaboration.

4) Consultation with the Comox Valley Accessibility Committee

Removing barriers to accessibility and ensuring full and equal participation requires dialogue with the community and particularly with individuals with disabilities. The Comox Valley Accessibility Committee is made up of residents with considerable expertise, experience and commitment to community-wide accessibility.

As this framework establishes a shared vision and commitments to remove barriers, it was developed collaboratively between local government staff, the Comox Valley Social Planning Society and representatives of the accessibility committee. Key insights and themes that emerged from this collaboration include:

- (topics to be considered)

The framework's commitments will be operationalized by each local government through accessibility assessments and plans with consultations considered according to their own priorities, processes and policies. The Accessibility Committee will assist the local governments to identify barriers to individuals in or interacting with the local governments, and advise the local governments on how to remove and prevent barriers to individuals in or interacting with the local governments.

5) Public Feedback Mechanism

Local governments have the power and obligation to incorporate the voices of their communities in their decision-making processes. Providing meaningful opportunities for public feedback on accessibility and inclusion will help ensure the work of the local governments reflect the community-wide needs and priorities. Further, people with disabilities, people who use local government services and other interested members of the public play a vital role in helping to identify, reduce, remove and prevent barriers.

The *Accessible British Columbia Act* and associated regulation mandate the establishment of processes for receiving public feedback on such accessibility plans, as well as enabling more general feedback on ideas and concerns related to accessibility. These feedback mechanisms

are critical to complement the work of the committees and each local government to make the Comox Valley the accessible and inclusive place we strive to be.

The development of public feedback tools is recognized as an incremental approach in which the tools and mechanisms will occur in stages based on available resources and knowledge gained over time. In addition, such tools may be provided on a community-wide basis where desired by the local governments or on an individual level.

The local governments and Accessibility Committee recognize that feedback mechanisms must be accessible through a variety of formats which may include web submissions, e-mail, phone, mail, in-person comments, direct engagement with the Accessibility Committee and other approaches. All feedback received by the local governments on accessibility assessments and actions plans will be reviewed and considered in consultation with the Accessibility Committee. Each local government will include a process for receiving comments from the public on barriers in their action plans.

6) Identify Barriers

According to the 2021 Survey on Accessibility in Federal Sector Organizations, 75% of British Columbians with disabilities, difficulties or long-term conditions encountered at least one barrier related to accessibility (Statistics Canada , 2021). In the absence of local government sector data, it can be assumed that Comox Valley residents with disabilities, difficulties or long-term consideration may experience similar barriers in accessing local government services and information.

Disability Alliance BC identifies barriers as social, technological, or physical aspects of the environment that prevent a person from participating fully in their community. Disability type and severity can also impact a person's experience of barriers (Government of Canada , 2022). BC's Accessibility Plan identifies the following barriers (Disability Alliance BC , 2020):

- **Attitudinal** – when people think and act based on false ideas, such as:
 - making decisions about people with disabilities without including them
 - not believing that a person with a disability can contribute to the workforce
- **Physical** – when obstacles make access difficult, such as:
 - a washroom with an accessible stall but no automatic door opener
 - hosting a meeting or public event in a space with no wheelchair access
- **Information or Communication** – When communication methods do not reach people with disabilities, such as:
 - using small print or not providing large-print versions of materials
 - videos, events, or meetings that do not have closed captions
- **Systemic** – When an organization's policies or procedures aren't inclusive, such as:
 - not providing an America Sign Language interpreter or closed captioning

- requiring a driver's license for a position when another form of transportation could be used
- **Technology** – When technology can't be accessed by people with disabilities, such as:
 - websites, documents, or databases that are not accessible for screen readers
 - website graphs and charts that do not have text to explain them
- **Sensory** – When lights, sounds or smells prevent participation in the environment, such as:
 - co-workers wearing perfume in the workplace
 - use of fluorescent lighting in public event spaces

7) Assessments and Action Plans

Action plans will clearly describe the local government's commitment to improving accessibility and reducing barriers. Action plans should identify both short term and long-term actions that may coincide with other planned work, such as major infrastructure works already identified by the local government in other planning and budget documents. Prioritization of actions can be based on a number of factors, including greatest impact to the most people, and financial and other resources. The accessibility committee can support the work to prioritize actions.

Each local government represents a unique community, and each provides a range of similar but distinctive services to its residents, based on each community's needs. It is expected that the local governments may each take a different approach towards assessments and building action plans under the guiding principles of this framework and each will determine the resources it requires and allocates towards the goals in its action plan, therefore the local governments assessments and development of actions plans will be unique.

Factors that may come into play for local governments may include existing planning documents, policies and practices, the age of infrastructure and facilities, existing capital plans for upgrades and replacement projects, interim measures to help improve accessibility, and prioritizing actions that may make the biggest impact.

Actions will be part of a larger process and as new technology, new tools, and understanding of the dynamics of disability evolves, improvements will be continuous. It is recognized that actions may not be the perfect solution for everyone. Feedback on actions can be used to inform future action planning. The importance of taking progressive steps towards greater accessibility and working towards viewing the community with an accessibility lens is paramount.

8) Three Year Timeframe

It is anticipated that the local governments will undertake assessments and actions plans within a reasonable time after the establishment of this framework. Action plans will be reviewed and updated every three years, after monitoring and evaluation.

This framework will be reviewed and may be updated on a regular basis, and may highlight completed actions and confirm renewed commitments from local governments.

9) Monitoring and Evaluation

Each local government is responsible for developing qualitative and quantitative metrics for monitoring and evaluating accessibility barriers to participation, representation of individuals with disabilities perspectives' in government processes and services, and the impact of initiatives on inclusion and access. The presence of a barrier may be identified through a variety of monitoring and evaluation approaches, for example analyzing program registration information and comparing with local statistical averages in the community may point to barriers previously unknown to the local government. Barriers to participation may also be identified through surveys, interviews and other feedback mechanisms; it is important to recognize that the perspectives of those who did and did not participate are both important to gain an understanding of the possible barriers to participation.

Local governments seek community feedback often and typically include standardized "demographic" questions in both qualitative and quantitative collection methods regarding age, gender, and income, rarely do local governments inquire about ability. Similar to the Federal Government, local governments could consider incorporating Statistics Canada disability screening questions in surveys in order to capture important information on accessibility, and engage in qualitative processes such as focus groups and interviews as a companion to data collection survey opportunities. Engaging in both qualitative and quantitative monitoring and evaluation methods, data representativeness and inclusion will be enhanced. Increased attention to accessibility information, will help ensure findings represent the needs and experiences of a diverse range of persons with disabilities.

10) Conclusion

This framework captures our overall commitment to accessibility. As planning develops, there will be continual assessments and opportunities to reduce barriers to local government services. Our collective efforts will aid in improving social health and well-being across the region.