



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

For the **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING** of Council to be held on Monday, October 28, 2024, at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 424 – 3rd Avenue West, Prince Rupert, B.C.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Recommendation:

THAT the Agenda for the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Monday, October 28, 2024, be adopted as circulated.

3. PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

- I. Presentation from Chris Armstrong Re: Community Update from the Lester Centre of the Arts;**
- II. Presentation from the Manager of Communications, Engagement and Social Development Re: Accessibility Plan**

Recommendation:

THAT Council recommends to the Regular Meeting, acceptance of the Accessibility Plan, as presented, and directs staff to include actioning of priorities from the plan as part of next iteration of Council's Strategic Plan; and,

- III. Presentation from the Chief Financial Officer Re: Public Budget 2025.**
- IV. Presentation from Deputy City Manager Re: Subdivision & Servicing Bylaw No. 3546, 2024; Sewer Regulations & Rates Bylaw No. 3548, 2024; Water Works Bylaw No. 3549, 2024; and Collection of Solid**

4. QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

5. ADJOURNMENT to Regular Council Meeting



REPORT TO COUNCIL

Committee of the Whole

DATE: October 28th, 2024

TO: Robert Buchan, City Manager

FROM: Veronika Stewart, Manager of Communications, Engagement and Social Development

SUBJECT: ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council recommends to the Regular Meeting, acceptance of the Accessibility Plan, as presented, and direct staff to include actioning of priorities from the Plan as part of the next iteration of Council's Strategic Plan.

REASON FOR REPORT:

Adoption of an Accessibility Plan is mandated by the Accessible BC Act, which came into effect in 2023. Adoption of the plan, developed in collaboration with the Accessibility Committee, will both support the need to address this mandated requirement and will support Council's overall goals to support the integration of equity and inclusion in future City activities.

BACKGROUND:

The Accessibility Plan was developed in collaboration with the regional committee that is primarily appointed by the City, and represents the Prince Rupert Library, North Coast Regional District and District of Port Edward.

As per the Accessible BC Act, organizations subject to the Act (which includes municipalities), three requirements come into force on September 1st, 2023. These requirements are as follows:

- Establishment of an accessibility committee;
- Development of an accessibility plan; and
- Establishment of a process for receiving public feedback.

The Plan follows input collected from the Accessibility Committee, the community via survey, two open house events, and an event at the Senior's Centre, as well as direct input from service sector organizations and staff at our respective organizations. This is

a living document, which may be reviewed and updated from time to time to reflect objectives that have been completed as well as new or revised priorities. Actions within the Plan can be included for reporting as part of the City's Annual Report, as well as Annual Budget processes.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Completion of the Accessibility Plan is an identified short-term priority objective within City Councils Strategic Plan for 2023-2027.

ANALYSIS:

The intent of the Accessibility Plan is to remove barriers to access for people that are structural/physical, attitudinal/social, created by how we share information or communicate, technological as well as systemic policies and practices. There are both legal and ethical imperatives for the City to be proactive in addressing these barriers for our community. As per the Provincial recommendation for areas within scope of an Accessibility Plan, the Committee has sought to identify actions that remove barriers in the following areas:

- Delivery of Programs and Services;
- Civic Facilities;
- Outdoor Recreation;
- The Built Environment;
- Employment; and,
- Transportation.

There are actions identified that will be relatively low cost and/or require staff time to address, and there are also actions that may require budget either as part of ongoing improvements (for instance installing curb letdowns as part of sidewalk renewal) or as one-time capital improvements (for instance, ensuring that a washroom in a public facility meets accessible standards). Where relevant, grants will be pursued to offset potential financial impacts to the City and partners in implementing these changes. In 2023-2024 alone, staff have received over \$130,000 in grants that are enabling accessibility improvements at the Recreation Complex.

In the 2025 Budget, capital projects like the replacement of the light at 3rd and Fulton (with audible crossing improvements) also include accessibility improvements as a part of existing budgetary costs. The Accessibility Plan identifies both opportunities to integrate accessibility considerations within existing renewal efforts and also standalone objectives that will be subject to Council approval through annual budget processes.

It should be noted that because the Plan identifies actions for other organizations, the City is only responsible for addressing those priorities that are specific to our organization, or that can be tackled collectively.

COMMUNITY SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS:

This Plan will help to address barriers for people with disabilities, which overall helps to make City programs and services accessible to all residents, and also supports a community that allows for aging in place. The Plan was developed directly by the Committee, which is majority made up of people with disabilities or support providers, with substantial input and a final recommendation to provide the Plan to the Boards and Councils of participating organizations for consideration. It is intended to reflect directly their priorities and vision for a more accessible region.

LINKS TO COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICY DIRECTION:

This resolution affirms and supports existing direction from the Transportation and Outdoor Parks and Recreation Plans, as well as the Strategic Plan.

COST:

The Accessibility Plan itself was developed in house, so the cost was staff time. Future costs related to the implementation of the Plan will be subject to regular Council Budget deliberation processes.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that Council adopt the Accessibility Plan as presented.

Report Prepared By:



Veronika Stewart,
Manager of Communications,
Engagement and Social Development

Report Reviewed By:

Robert Buchan,
City Manager

Attachment(s):

- Prince Rupert and Area Accessibility Plan

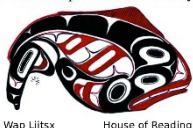
Originally signed available on request



Prince Rupert and Area **Accessibility Plan**



Prince Rupert Public Library



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Territorial Acknowledgement

The City of Prince Rupert, District of Port Edward, North Coast Regional District and Prince Rupert Library would like to acknowledge that we are on the territory of the Ts'msyen, who have called these lands and waters home since time immemorial.

Executive Summary

The City of Prince Rupert, North Coast Regional District, Prince Rupert Library and District of Port Edward are collectively committed to improving the experience of people with disabilities across our organizations and services.

Accessibility may look different to different people depending on whether they experience physical, mental health, cognitive, communication, intellectual, sensory, or age-related impairments. There is a lot that can be done to improve experiences across this range of needs, and so this document is only a start to identifying key priorities brought forward by our Accessibility Committee and the community at large.

If we are successful, accessibility looks like all residents being able to access services and programs they need, get around in our communities, and feel like they belong in our public places. In practice, this has led us to identify priorities across the fields of service delivery, the built environment, transportation, employment and outdoor parks and recreation that you will see identified in the following pages.

Moving forward, we will also be implementing feedback mechanisms across our respective organizations to inform future updates to this plan, alongside future input from our Accessibility Committee.





About our Organizations

The City of Prince Rupert, District of Port Edward, North Coast Regional District and Prince Rupert Library are community service and governance based organizations that provide essential services to North Coast residents. See below for details on our respective organizations, services and mandates.

City of Prince Rupert

Established as a municipality in 1910, Prince Rupert is located on Ts'msyen territory - an area rich with history. What's now called Prince Rupert harbour was long an intersection of trade and commerce for First Nations people dating back to time immemorial. Our City is tucked in between impressive mountains and the 3rd deepest natural harbour in the world. The rain and weather patterns characteristic of this place give us both our title as the 'City of Rainbows', as well as the lush natural landscapes of the Great Bear Rainforest. It also makes for a resilient population - ready to weather both literal and figurative storms.

As a community that thrives on its resilience, our municipality must work to make sure that all residents have the opportunity to benefit from all that our area and organization offers. We have been working on that commitment through updating our Transportation and Parks and Outdoor Recreation Plans, and this Accessibility Plan cements that commitment in a way that will guide us for the years to come.

About our Organizations

District of Port Edward

Port Edward, established in 1966, is a small but vibrant community located on the traditional lands of the Ts'msyen people, nestled along the Northern Coast of British Columbia. Our District is known for its picturesque surroundings, including the rugged coastline and proximity to the Great Bear Rainforest, offering an idyllic environment for both residents and visitors alike. With a population of just over 500 people, Port Edward is a tight-knit, resilient community that embraces its natural beauty and heritage while striving to provide sustainable development and economic opportunities for its residents.



The District of Port Edward is dedicated to ensuring that every member of our community has access to the services, amenities, and opportunities that our region provides. Our commitment to accessibility is reflected in our planning and development efforts, as we aim to create a more inclusive environment for everyone. As we look to the future, we are focusing on integrating accessible features into our infrastructure projects, parks, and recreational facilities, ensuring that our public spaces are welcoming and usable for individuals of all abilities.

By making accessibility a core priority in our planning processes, we are working towards building a more inclusive community that allows all residents and visitors to fully participate in and enjoy everything Port Edward has to offer. Through ongoing efforts in transportation planning, infrastructure improvements, and recreational development, we will continue to strengthen this commitment in alignment with our long-term vision for a thriving and accessible community.



About our Organizations

Prince Rupert Library

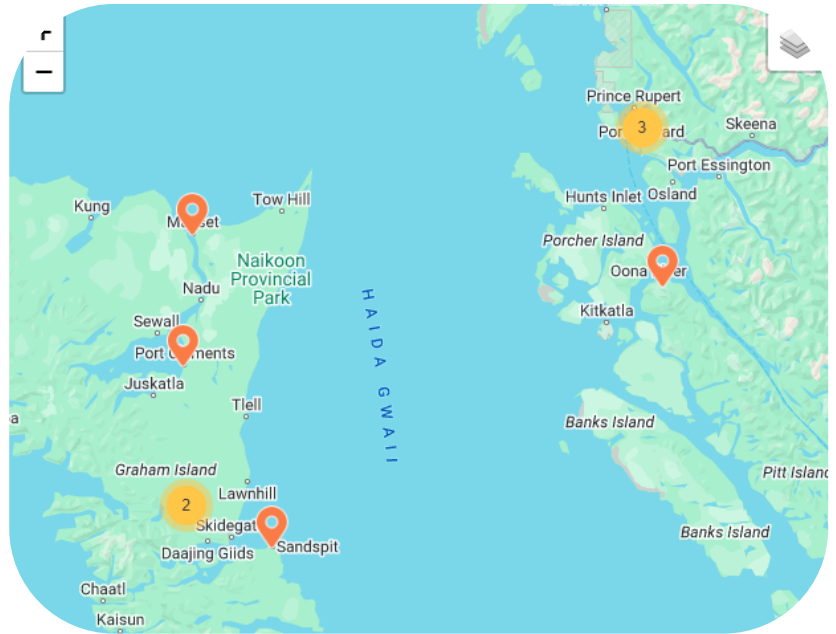
Centrally located at the corner of McBride and 6th Avenue West in Prince Rupert, the Prince Rupert Library is a key public amenity directed by a dedicated board of volunteer trustees. The Library recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, and as we pass this milestone look forward to a future where we carry forth the fundamental principles of literacy, free and equal access to information, public engagement, and healthy democratic debate in our programming and operations.

Through prudent selection of digital technologies, print and online resources, programming and events, our aim continues to be the betterment of our community and patrons in their lives, work, and health. As such, conversations around accessibility are always at the forefront, and we are continually striving to recognize barriers that may exist. In working with the Prince Rupert and Area Accessibility Committee, the Prince Rupert Library will continue to fashion its services, equipment, and policies to meet a wide range of needs and abilities.

About our Organizations

North Coast Regional District

The NCRD has a population of 18,181 people living across a land area of 19,775.41 km² as of 2021 in the area surrounding and including the City of Prince Rupert, some islands along the coast, and the islands of Haida Gwaii. The four electoral areas A, C, D, and E include much of the land area but only a small percentage of the area's population (988 in total).



The largest municipality in the NCRD is Prince Rupert with 12,300 residents. The neighbouring municipality of Port Edward has 470 residents. The Village of Daajing Giids (964), the Village of Masset (838), and the Village of Port Clements (340) are all located as pockets inside the boundaries of NCRD Electoral Area D. The remaining population of the NCRD lives within the First Nations reserves in the region. The NCRD was formerly known as the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District.

While anyone can have a disability, and a disability can occur at any point in a person's life, disabilities are more common among adults 65 years of age and older. As of 2021, the average age of British Columbia's population was 43.1. Meanwhile, some NCRD communities have an average age that is higher than the provincial average, ranging between 40 and 60. The remote nature of NCRD communities means that is often more difficult for residents with disabilities to live a barrier-free life, regardless of age. As such, the NCRD is keenly aware and conscientious about opportunities to support accessibility initiatives across our regional services.

Our Accessibility Story

This Plan has been developed directly by a committee of residents who gave their time, ideas and enthusiasm to put forward a vision for our communities that is inclusive of all. Change will take time, but this Plan commits us collectively to addressing accessibility our respective organizations. This will also be a working document, and in addition to this Plan, our organizations have also implemented mechanisms for more regular resident feedback with respect to accessibility concerns.

We are so pleased to be able to present to you our plan to make Prince Rupert and Port Edward more inviting to all. ♡

Message from the Accessibility Committee



Imagine yourself in a wheelchair, bumping along the street until you hit a curb. Imagine you are blind and in an elevator, confronted with a flat, smooth array of buttons. Imagine yourself with a walker or a child's stroller, trying to get up the stairs into the curling rink, or the Wheelhouse.

Imagine if you lived in a town full of staircases. And you, in a wheelchair. Imagine it.

In 2023, Prince Rupert City Hall didn't just throw their hands up. They set up the Accessibility Committee, bringing together a diverse group of people with disabilities that meet once a month to tackle some of these issues. Sometimes the solutions are obvious and sometimes they require creative thinking, but we share a common goal: to make the city a place everyone can enjoy.

The committee accepts diverse disabilities. Any meeting might include someone working with special needs children, blind adults, or spinal cord injuries. Everyone. What brings us all together is a commitment to valuable and passionate input. We all care. Sounds hokey, but just imagine how great it could be if the city was accessible to all.

What Do we do?

The committee got to work, applying for grants to tackle some immediate problems. For instance, we've supported an application funding for a ramp to the curling rink, and added grab bars in the change rooms at the community pool. And slowly but surely we are working on policy that supports better inclusion across a number of areas of service that the City of Prince Rupert, Library, District of Port Edward, and North Coast Regional District provide.



Contributed by Emma Kivisild, Committee Member

Acknowledgement of Key Contributors

Dedication:

The Committee would like to recognize the contributions of past Committee representative, Sharon Small, who sadly passed away while sitting on our Committee. We dedicate the work that we do to her memory, and appreciate her advocacy and support.

Thank you to all of our committee members who took time out of their busy schedules to provide feedback.

Current and past committee members included:

Grainne Barthe
Anne Falvo
Ed Landrath
Eleanor Skelton
Val Wiley
Vikki Fraser
Emma Kvisild
Sharon Small
Kimberley Millar
Kaitlyn Kowal

Staff supports included:

Howard Tsang, North Coast Regional District
Veronika Stewart, City of Prince Rupert
Mercedes Taylor, Prince Rupert Library
Polly Pereira, District of Port Edward

Interviewees + Organizations that contributed:

Better at Home Program (Kxeen Community Services Society); Coast Mountain College; Kaien Trails; Prince Rupert Gymnastics; Prince Rupert Special Olympics; Prince Rupert Seniors Centre;

Thanks are also in order to the Prestige Hotel, for their generous donation of their breakfast room as an accessible space for us to hold our meetings.

Definitions

Ableism: Ableism is the conscious or unconscious negative view or belief that persons with disabilities are less able to contribute and participate, making them less worthy of respect. Ableism is analogous to racism, sexism or ageism.

Barriers: Barriers are the difficulties or disadvantages an individual may have when functioning in a given environment. These restrictions can be, amongst others, physical (e.g. stairs, no ramp, things put too high, inadequate infrastructure or transport), informational (e.g. inaccessible information technology, signage), or attitudinal (e.g., ableism, stereotypes, stigmas).

Adaptive technology: Hardware or software products that provide access to a computer that is otherwise inaccessible to an individual with a disability.

Disability: The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) defines *disability* as “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation—whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.” There are many definitions of disability as the understanding of the concept is complex and continuously evolving, so the definition provided acknowledges that it may need updating in future.

Impairment: An impairment can be defined “as any partial or complete loss, diminishment, or decrease of the function of a body part, organ or system, whether physiological, psychological or anatomical”. An impairment is generally associated with an organic or medical condition. Example: Hearing loss, speech impediment, vision reduction or loss, spinal cord injury, brain and neurological conditions, developmental, cognitive and learning disorders, etc.

Definitions

Interpreter:

Professional person who assists a person who is deaf in communicating with hearing people.

Large print books:

Most ordinary print is six to ten points in height (about 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch). Large type is fourteen to

eighteen points (about 1/8 to 1/4 of an inch) and sometimes larger. The format of large print books is also proportionately larger (usually 8 1/2 x 11 inches).

Mainstreaming, inclusion: The inclusion of people with disabilities, with or without special accommodations, in programs, activities, and facilities with their non-disabled peers.

WCAG 2.0 Standard: WCAG 2.0 refers to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which are published by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 provide recommendations for making Web content more accessible. By following these guidelines, partner organizations will make content more accessible to a wide range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. In addition, these guidelines will often make Web content more usable to everyone in general.



Accessibility Principles, continued...

The principles below were developed by the Province of BC as part of their consultation process in development the Accessible BC Act.

Inclusion: All British Columbians, including persons with disabilities, should be able to participate fully and equally in their communities

Adaptability: Accessibility plans should reflect that disability and accessibility are evolving concepts that change, such as programs, services, technology, attitudes, communication and architectural change.

Diversity: Every person is unique. People of all abilities are individuals with varied backgrounds. Individual characteristics including race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and lived experience greatly inform the experiences of individuals. Accessibility plans and services should acknowledge the principle of intersectionality and the diversity within the disability community.

Collaboration: : Promoting accessible communities is a shared responsibility and everyone has a role to play. Accessibility plans should create opportunities for organizations and communities to work together to promote access and inclusion.

Self-determination: Accessibility plans should seek to empower people with disabilities to make their own choices and pursue the lives they wish to live.

Universal Design: The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design defines Universal Design as “the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.” An accessibility plan should be designed to meet the needs of all people who wish to interact with the Organization.

Background + Context

The work of the Prince Rupert and Area Accessibility committee builds upon past efforts made in the community towards reducing barriers for all residents in Prince Rupert and Port Edward. This includes the 2007 report from the Measuring Up Committee—with several recommendations being carried forward directly from that report.

In the years since, community partners have led additional planning efforts that mention accessibility, including the City’s Official Community Plan (2020), Vision 2030 document (2019), Parks and Recreation Plan (2023), and Transportation Plan (2023). The NCRD also has a separate accessibility Plan for its Haida Gwaii communities, and accessibility changes have historically been incorporated into the budgets of all of our respective organizations.

Although these documents and processes all recognize the need for accessible opportunities in our region, this Plan is the first that makes it **the priority**, looking holistically at all of the different types of services, programs and amenities we provide.

All residents and visitors should have the ability to access activities, opportunities, goods, and services, regardless of their age, ability, income, or other socio-demographic characteristics. This can be achieved by ensuring the built environment is planned and designed following universal design principles along with supportive programs.

*— City of Prince Rupert,
“Connect Rupert”
Transportation Plan, Adopted
September, 2023*

Accessibility in context. This plan is for everyone.

Anyone can have a disability, including a hidden disability, and a disability can occur at any point in a person's life. However, disabilities are more common among adults 65 years of age and older.

- In 2018, nearly 913,000 British Columbians were aged 65 years or older and over 115,000 British Columbians were aged 85 years or older
- By 2031, almost 1 in 4 people in B.C. (more than 1.3 million people) will be over the age of 65
- 20.5% of British Columbians between the ages of 15 and 64 live with a disability
- 70% of people with disabilities report more than one disability
- 41.7% of British Columbians over the age of 65 live with a disability



Understanding Barriers to Accessibility

Persons with disabilities face accessibility barriers in all aspects of society from using public transit, finding and maintaining employment, to accessing buildings.

What is a barrier? A barrier is an obstacle or anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability. There are many different types of barriers. Barriers can be visible, invisible, physical, attitudinal, technological, information and communication barriers. Provided below are examples of six types of barriers that a person with a disability may encounter.

Physical barriers are only half the battle. Attitudes matter, too.

Types of Barriers	Definition	Examples of Barriers
<i>Architectural/ Structural/Physical</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This barrier may result from the design of the building, shape of rooms, size of doorways, or width of hallways Barriers can also result from objects added to the environment, such as doors, windows, elevators, furniture, bathroom hardware, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hallways and doorways that are too narrow for a person using a wheelchair, electric scooter or walker or poor lighting for people with vision loss Counters that are too high for a person or door knobs that are difficult for people with arthritis to grasp
<i>Attitudinal/Social</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This barrier occur when bias and stereotypes about persons with disabilities impede their full participation in all aspects of society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking that because a person's disability is not visible they do not have a genuine disability and therefore do not require an accommodation

Understanding Barriers to Accessibility

Types of Barriers	Definition	Examples of Barriers
<i>Information or communications</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This barrier make it difficult for people to receive, interpret and send information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person with vision loss may not be able to read printed materials, read signs, locate landmarks, or see a hazard or a person with an intellectual disability may not understand information that is not expressed in plain language. Reduction of these barriers also support newly landed immigrants who have English as a second-language.
<i>Technology</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This barrier occur when technology cannot be modified to support an assistive device 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An internet website or a webpage that does not support screen-reading software or does not provide alternative text for images
<i>Systemic, Policy or Practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This barrier can result from an organization's policies, practices and procedures if they restrict persons with disabilities or the lack of awareness of existing laws regulations that require programs and activities be accessible to people with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A hiring process that only permits applicants to submit their resume through an online application system and the organization does not offer any alternatives to the online application process

What is in scope of the plan

We based the different sections of our plan on the areas that the Province has identified should be considered as needing specific standards that address accessibility. Essentially, these are the main things that we do where there are areas that could be improved.

Delivery of Programs and Services: This section refers to the way that we deliver programs and services to residents within our respective jurisdictions and facilities. This includes waste pick up and drop off, online and website services, library and recreational programming, permitting application processes, events, and other services.

Civic Facilities: This section refers to priorities that are specific to the physical facilities that each of our respective organizations has in Prince Rupert, Port Edward and the surrounding areas. It refers to everything from our administrative buildings, to recreation facilities, to the library and cemetery.

Outdoor Recreation: This section refers to priorities identified with respect to our collective community parks, tot lots, trails, sport courts, fields, and outdoor recreation leisure spaces.

The Built Environment: This section addresses priorities that are considered 'hard' infrastructure. This includes our roads and sidewalks, lighting, signs and wayfinding, washrooms, as well as accommodations for accessible parking and loading.

Employment: This section addresses priorities we have identified relating to how accommodating we are as employers, and how we might make all of our workplaces more inclusive for people with disabilities.

Transportation: This section looks at priorities in our local transportation sector, which for the jurisdiction of our organizations essentially refers to the local public transit and airport ferry systems.

Review of Public Engagement Process, Barriers Identified and Key Themes

Following the establishment of the City’s Accessibility Committee in May of 2023, the Committee developed a draft list of proposed accessibility related actions in the different priority areas identified by the [Accessible BC Act](#). This information was provided to community partner organizations for initial review, and several meetings were held with interest holders in the community, as well as opportunities for general public engagement, which were conducted via paper surveys distributed at the Library, Seniors Centre, Recreation Complex, City Hall, and also at the 75-50 Club event.

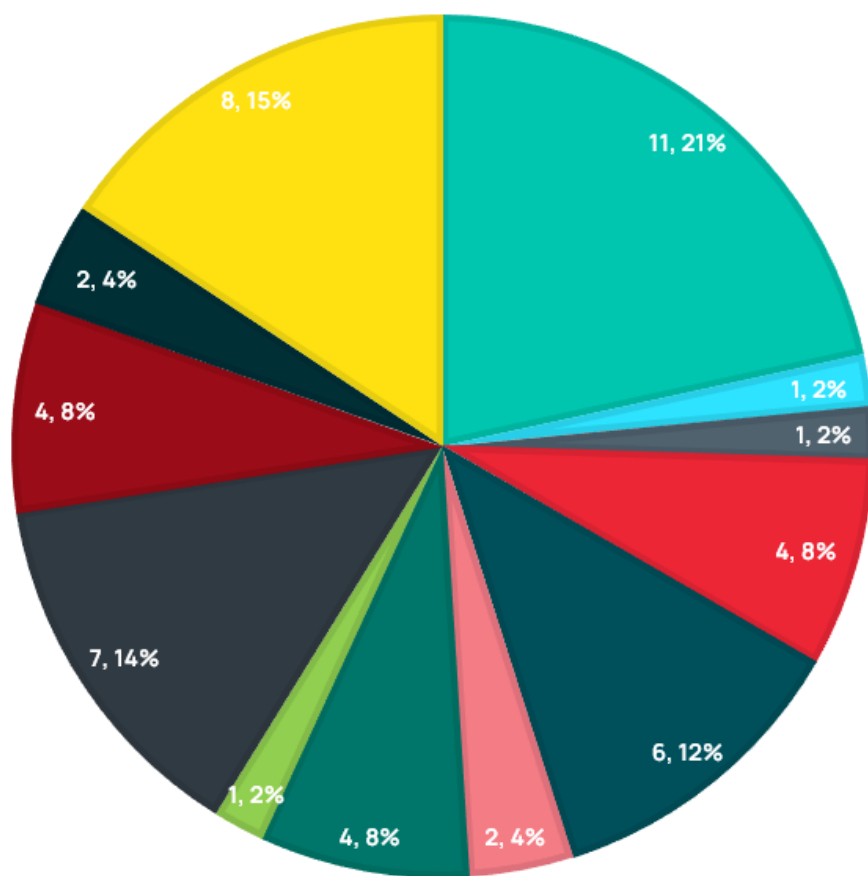
Of those 59 people who participated in the online and paper surveys, 54 were from Prince Rupert, 4 were from the surrounding areas, and one was from Port Edward. Of those respondents, 37% identify as a person with a disability, 41% identified as a person without a disability,

14% identified as providing care taking services to a person or people with disabilities, and the remaining 8% preferred not to say or identified as ‘Other’.

Of those people who identified as having a disability, the following disabilities were represented in the survey. This helps us to capture the diversity of potential accessibility needs represented in the community.

What are our Accessibility Needs

- Mobility disability
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Sensory processing disability
- Flexibility disability
- Developmental disability
- Mental Health disability
- Memory disability
- Pain-related disability
- Neurological disability
- Learning disability
- Prefer not to say

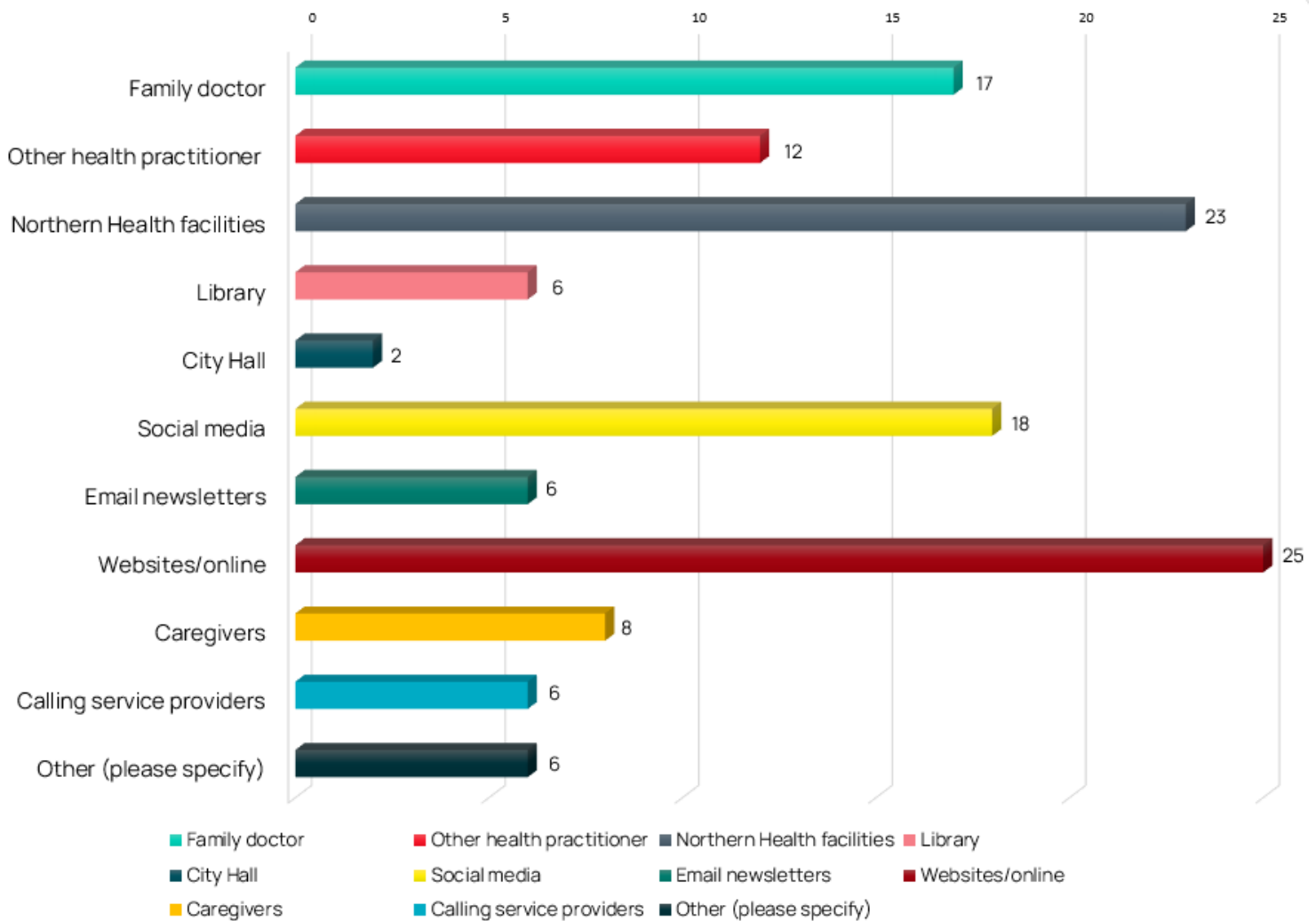




Review of Public Engagement Key Statistics

How people find information

Where do you look for information around accessible services? The majority of people look to their family doctor, Northern Health and other health care practitioners for information, but a significant number also look online and to social media for supports. Collecting this information will help inform us about the best communication avenues to use to reach people in the community regarding available services and any new programs.

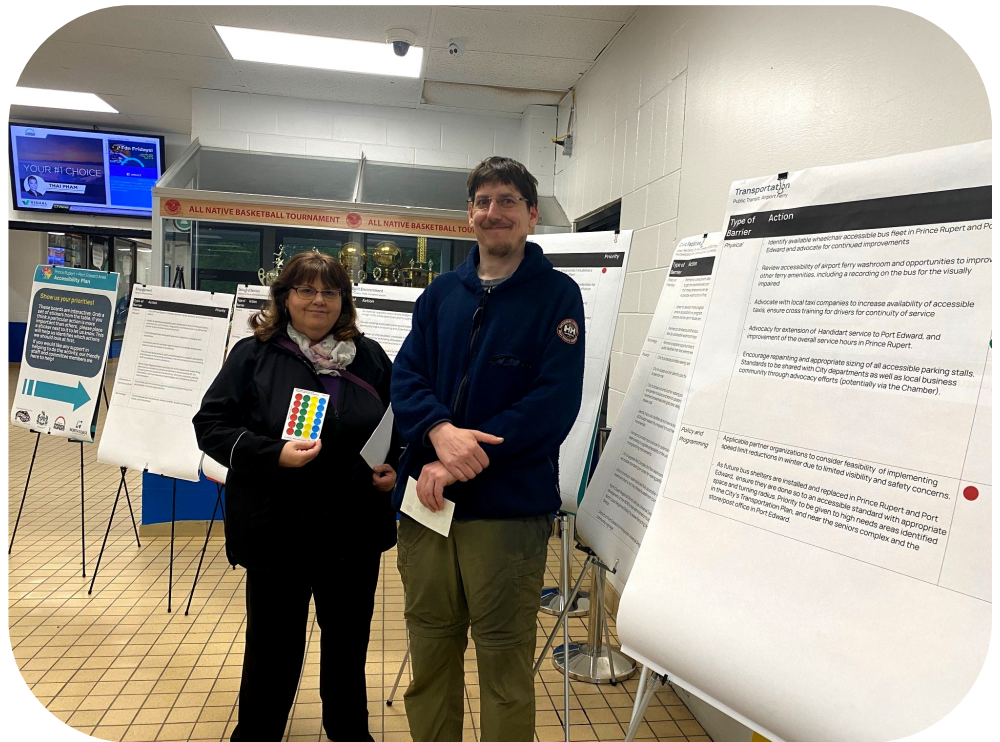


Review of Public Engagement

Key Statistics

Accessibility themes from written feedback

A number of themes were identified in reviewing the feedback provided in the sections where open-ended questions were provided. In some cases these impacted how we structured our priorities, and helped us to emphasize the importance of particular topics.



The following topics were identified by multiple users and emerged thematically across responses.

- Sidewalk and crosswalk accessibility and lighting
- Accessibility of Council Meetings
- Accessible parking in downtown core
- Importance of transit shelter accessibility
- Accessibility of Recycling services
- Accessible washrooms
- Accessibility of Recreation facilities + programming
- Provision of information from partners about available employment accommodations
- Increased frequency and schedule of HandiDart service

Issues identified in the comments generally lined up with existing priorities. Where new ideas for priorities related to accessibility were presented, they were integrated as a new item into the Plan. We appreciate all of the detailed and careful input provided by the public and interest holders through this process.

Priorities for Action

The following actions were developed through consultation with our Committee, the community at large as well as accessibility focused services in the community. The associated priority levels were based on a combination of total survey results and feasibility as identified by our organizations. For instance, for some actions we may be able to complete a priority sooner than identified by the community due to availability of grant funds, or with other larger projects there may need to be additional time and fundraising needed to complete those objectives.

Legend



Short Term (1-2 years)



Long Term (6-10 years)



Medium Term (3-5 years)



Ongoing—requires year over year commitment

Delivery of Programs and Services

Strategy: Address physical barriers in the built environment that prevent inclusive access to partner services to support mainstreaming + inclusion

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Seek out funding opportunities to purchase a pool wheelchair that can access saunas or make alternative upgrades					City of Prince Rupert (CPR)
Provide Wheelchair accessible study area/desks					Prince Rupert Library (PRL)
Provide designated space for those with sensory issues/ sensitivities					PRL

Delivery of Programs and Services

Strategy: Address technological barriers that may prevent access to services through lack of consideration for assistive technologies and identify opportunities for technological improvements

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Promotion for speech program such as Non-visual desktop access (NVDA) or other assistive technologies on City and partner websites					All parties
Explore updating North Coast Regional District website to ensure it meets WCAG 2 (accessible) standards					North Coast Regional District (NCRD)
Explore updating the District of Port Edward website to ensure it meets WCAG2 (accessible) standards					District of Port Edward (DPE)
Library to investigate integration with Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) programming and adaptive technologies					Prince Rupert Library (PRL)



Delivery of Programs and Services

Strategy: Address systemic, policy or practices that are ableist as well as attitudinal and social barriers that exist within our service delivery

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Explore joint or individual sensitivity training and education for partner employees regarding both physical and mental disability for those who deliver services.					All parties
Support awareness in local businesses/organizations that guide dogs are legally permitted on all premises					All parties (with Chamber of Commerce).
Incorporate input from appropriate accessibility specialists when making accessibility upgrades, for public or in support of an employee requiring accommodation.					All parties
Develop literacy, recreational and aquatic programming and review our current programs to ensure accessibility ie. programming for neuro-divergent kids and adults, sensory kits for use in house and to check-out (where applicable)					PRL + CPR

Table continued on next page – >

Delivery of Programs and Services

Strategy: Address systemic, policy or practices that are ableist as well as attitudinal and social barriers that exist within our service delivery

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Provide recreation programming that allows participation from people of all abilities, including provision of accessible					CPR
Update emergency plans and procedures to ensure that people with disabilities are included as part of evacuation and communication considerations					All parties



Delivery of Programs and Services

Strategy: Improve information and communications regarding availability of accessible services and the accessibility of communication itself.

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Development of an accessibility service/ support directory					All parties— can be housed on City website
Develop accessible business listing—to be made available online via City website, mobile application and to Tourism Visitor Information Centre.					All parties (Potential partnership with Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Prince Rupert)
Adopt policy that incorporates the standardized use of the closed captioning function on tele-conference softwares					All parties
Encourage and publicize programming from other local accessibility-focused organizations;					All parties

Civic Facilities

Strategy: Address physical + structural barriers—This barrier refer to objects added to the environment, such as doors, windows, elevators, furniture, bathroom hardware, etc

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Publicize existing portable viewing ramp developed for ice rink					CPR
Scope out and identify cost for potential heated area/viewing ramp to see ice rink					CPR
Scope out and cost for redoing pool changerooms to be accessible and gender inclusive and include this in long term capital planning					CPR
Identify if any civic facilities do not have automatic door openers in exterior doors, changerooms and washrooms, and advocate to fund these improvements incrementally.					All parties
Offer support and partnership to upgrade accessibility of the Lester Centre through physical or programming improvements					All parties
City to upgrade Recreation Complex 2nd floor washrooms (accessible by lift) to accessible standard					CPR
Accessible and gender neutral washroom options to be considered in any renovations and pursued as funding permits					All parties

Civic Facilities

Strategy: Address physical + structural barriers—This barrier refer to objects added to the environment, such as doors, windows, elevators, furniture, bathroom hardware, etc

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Use Universal Design to inform the development of new administration building.					NCRD
Review Recycling Depot using Universal Design.					NCRD
Improve accessible parking amenity identification and signage at the Recreation Complex.					CPR
Consider sound dampening or insulating materials to reduce noise overlap and promote positive sensory environments in customer service areas					All parties

Strategy: Address technological barriers that may prevent use of assistive technologies in civic facilities and identify opportunities for technological improvements

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Partners to explore opportunities to make portable amplification devices at public facilities that host events/workshops					All parties

Civic Facilities

Strategy: Address Systemic, Policy or Practice; Attitudinal/Social Barriers in Civic Facilities through the implementation of policy and practices that support inclusion in public spaces.

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Partners to consult with allied health professionals and building standards to get the recommended turning radius for a standard power wheelchair so that these dimensions can be incorporated into accessible washroom builds					All parties
Partners to familiarize facility staff with accessible amenities as part of onboarding + training					All parties
Develop wheelchair lift protocol at the Recreation Complex to ensure that all staff in Complex are aware when in use and on call for support					CPR

Strategy: Address Communications barriers in civic facilities so that all locations support easy navigation for all

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Review on site signage against accessibility standards (font standards and braille options)					All parties

Outdoor Recreation

Strategy: Address physical barriers in outdoor recreational spaces to promote inclusive access to recreational and preventative health opportunities

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Prioritize accessibility when renewing City and District playgrounds and consider signage that supports neurodiverse needs					CPR, DPE
Implementation of accessible washrooms at Rotary Waterfront Park and other non-serviced waterfront areas					CPR
Design and build parks and facilities that are accessible for all ages and abilities, including picnic tables and other amenities					All parties
Support development of Cloudberry Trail as a Multi-Use Pathway as planned and started by Kaien Trails					All parties
Support upgrades to Rushbrook Trail for accessibility, as proposed by Kaien Trails.					All parties

Outdoor Recreation

Strategy: Address information or communications barriers around accessibility of parks and outdoor recreational spaces

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Publicize availability of Kaien Trails trailrunner apparatus that provides universal access to local trails through a volunteer program. Reach out to Kaien Trails for future consideration to include on trail signage.					All parties

Strategy: Address policy or practice that can make outdoor parks and recreation programs more inclusive

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Provide programs and services that are affordable, inclusive, and meet diverse needs (recommendation in Parks and Outdoor Recreation Plan) - ensuring that accessible services are available throughout the community (vs. clustered).					CPR
Support coordination of trolley tour and other accessibility focused events in collaboration with disability serving organizations					All parties

The Built Environment

Strategy: Address physical barriers that pose challenges to people with disabilities

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
As sidewalk upgrades occur and/or budget allows upgrade to curb rollovers in high traffic areas downtown and throughout neighbourhoods					CPR and DPE
Review existing accessible parking and loading areas and seek out community input on existing and potential new locations					All parties
Installation of chip (audible) crosswalk indicators at major intersections and consideration for extending allowable crossing time and/or advocacy for Provincially controlled intersections in Prince Rupert and Port Edward					CPR and DPE
Improve annual maintenance of sidewalks to grind down areas that become elevated					CPR and DPE
Consider resourcing to improve snow removal on sidewalks, especially around bus stops					CPR and DPE
Consider improvements to the surfacing of the tree grates downtown (traction).					CPR

The Built Environment

Strategy: Address policy and programming barriers that prevent inclusive access to the built environment

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Develop and implement complete streets standards that include rolling accessibility in the assessment matrix for sidewalks and intersections					CPR
Poll local businesses, services and restaurants regarding accessibility and advocate, share opportunities for improvements—in collaboration with the local Chamber of Commerce					All parties with Accessibility Committee

Strategy: Address information and communication barriers in the built environment to promote improved accessibility

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Provide a map or similar resource identifying accessible washroom locations in the community to both residents and visitors					All parties in collaboration with Tourism PR
Consideration for highlighting of accessibility considerations in wayfinding and signage					All parties in collaboration with Tourism PR

Employment

Strategy: Address policy and programming barriers that prevent inclusive access to employment in our respective organizations

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Develop accessibility protocols to ensure hiring practices, workroom etc. are inclusive					PRL
Committee partners will explore grants re: placement of people with disabilities;					All parties
Develop equity policy and procedures, checklists, to support accessibility and inclusion in the existing workplace. Include a survey of existing staff to evaluate current conditions;					CPR
Review and improve hiring practices by considering barriers caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies and intersecting forms of discrimination.					All parties
Include established employee accessibility resources and practices on Job Posting websites					All parties



Employment

Strategy: Address Technological barriers that prevent inclusive access to employment in our respective organizations

Actions	Priority				Party/Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Committee partners will promote, where possible, access in the workplace via assistive technologies					All parties

Transportation

Strategy: Address physical barriers that prevent inclusive access to transportation in our area

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Identify available wheelchair accessible bus fleet in Prince Rupert and Port Edward and advocate for continued improvements					City of PR and District of Port Edward
Review accessibility of airport ferry washroom, bus, and opportunities to improve other ferry amenities, including a recording on the bus for the visually impaired					City of PR
Advocate with local taxi companies to increase availability of accessible taxis, suggest cross training					All parties
Advocacy for extension of Handidart service to Port Edward, and improvement of the overall service hours in Prince Rupert					All parties
Encourage repainting and appropriate sizing of all accessible parking stalls. Standards to be shared with City and District departments as well as local business community through advocacy efforts					CPR, DPE and potentially Chamber of Commerce

Transportation

Strategy: Address policy and programming barriers that prevent inclusive access to transportation in our area

Actions	Priority				Party/ Parties Responsible
	Short	Med	Long	Ongoing	
Applicable partner organizations to implement campaign to promote safe driving according to light and weather conditions					CPR and DPE
As future bus shelters are installed and replaced in Prince Rupert and Port Edward, ensure they are done so to an accessible standard with appropriate space and turning radius. Priority to be given to high needs areas identified in the City's Transportation Plan, and near the seniors complex and the store/post office in Port Edward					CPR



Measuring progress. A plan in motion.

Our respective organizations will incorporate this Plan into our annual reporting and budget processes to collectively work towards reaching the commitments identified in the previous pages.

This may look different, depending on organizational capacity, however it could include:

- Reporting out on individual projects
- Annual review of Accessibility Plan by Committee and progress on initiatives
- Direct reporting on Plan actions in Annual Reports
- Follow up surveys to community following Plan implementation
- Future updates to the Plan to address shifting community priorities

We've Hit the Ground Running!

During the planning process, certain priorities were identified that we could start before the Plan was adopted through grant funding and partnerships. In addition, the community at large has also initiated projects that align with the Plan. (Bonus!)

What are some projects or programs already underway?



\$100,000 in funding secured to make upstairs washrooms at the Civic Centre accessible



Sensory friendly swim times put forward by North Coast Community Services at the pool, sponsored by Trigon



Enhanced Mobility Community Program with partners at the Civic Centre + Library, Prince Rupert Gymnastics Association



Supporting the Curling Club in grant applications for an exterior accessibility ramp



Mobility rental kits now available at the Prince Rupert Library



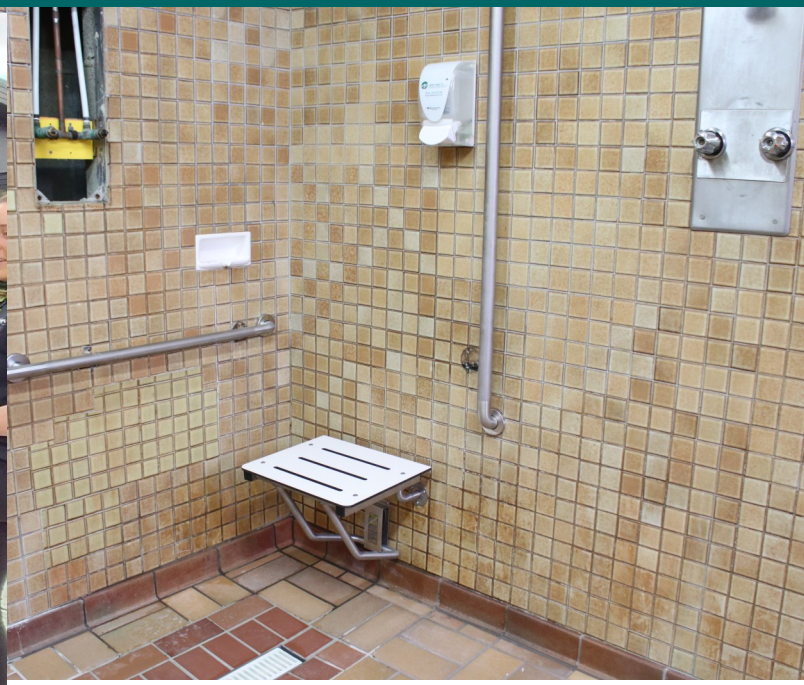
Funding achieved for 3 new bus shelters that will be wheelchair accessible



Funding secured for accessibility upgrades at the swimming pool showers from Northern Health



City website updated to accessible standard (WCAG2)



Future Feedback

The Accessible BC Act requires that local governments and other organizations impacted by the legislation establish a feedback mechanism for the public. The key requirement is that this must be a point of contact that is available to the public and always open. See below for our respective feedback mechanisms for each of our organizations:

City of Prince Rupert

Online form: engage.princerupert.ca/access

Phone number: 250 627 0976

Email Address: communications@princerupert.ca

District of Port Edward

Phone number: 250 628 3667

Email Address: info@portedward.ca

North Coast Regional District

Phone number: 250 624 2022

Email Address: info@ncrdbc.com

Prince Rupert Library

Phone number: 250 627 1345

Email Address: info@princerupertlibrary.ca

Individuals submitting complaints through these individual feedback channels will receive receipt of their request, and where possible a follow up communication regarding potential actions taken to address the feedback.



Thank you for reading.

For more information on the work of our Accessibility Committee, reach out to: