

The City of Delta's Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

The City of Delta has created this Accessibility Plan in accordance with the requirements of the *Accessible British Columbia Act*. Delta's Accessibility Plan was developed based on the advice of the City's Mobility and Accessibility Committee and incorporates feedback from the broader community. It was approved by Council on June 19, 2023.

The City of Delta's Accessibility Plan considers the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design

while providing specific goals and actions to support the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to accessibility.

Commitment to accessibility

The City of Delta is committed to:

- identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility to benefit the community, respecting the dignity, independence, and input of people with disabilities who inform and guide the City's accessibility efforts;
- working within its jurisdictional authority to deliver accessibility improvements in the community; and
- making Council members and staff aware of their roles related to influencing accessibility and strives to support positive community attitudes towards accessibility.

Definitions

Accessibility means the degree of ease that something can be used and enjoyed by people with disabilities.

Accommodate means the changes or modifications made to meet the needs of a specific individual or group.

Disability means an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

Diversity means a range of human differences, such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, education, religion, and other differences.

Equity means the fair distribution of opportunities, power, and resources to meet the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, gender, income, education level, culture, or background.

Legislative Background

Accessible British Columbia Act

An Accessibility Plan is required by the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, which became law in June 2021. Local governments are required to have an accessibility committee, accessibility plan, and a public feedback tool in place by September 1, 2023.

The accessibility plan should outline how the organization will identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people in the organization or those who interact with it. The plan must be reviewed and updated at least once every three years. In

developing or updating the plan, the local government must consult with its accessibility committee and consider the following principles:

- Inclusion
- Adaptability
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Self-determination
- Universal design

BC Human Rights Code

The *BC Human Rights Code* protects people from discrimination and harassment, including on the basis of physical or mental disability.

Accessible Canada Act

The *Accessible Canada Act* came into force in 2019 and applies to a wide range of federally regulated entities, not including local governments. The Act has the overarching goal of realizing a barrier-free Canada by 2040 and focuses on seven priority areas:

- Employment
- The built environment

- Information and communication technologies
- Communication other than information and communication technologies
- The design and delivery of programs and services
- The procurement of goods, services, and facilities
- Transportation

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Canada has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which guarantees human rights for individuals with disabilities around the world. The principles outlined in UNCRPD are:

- Respect for inherent dignity; individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices; and independence of persons
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility

Stakeholders

The City of Delta's Accessibility Plan includes the following stakeholders:

- Council
- Mobility and Accessibility Committee
- Delta Residents
- Delta Businesses
- Community Organizations and Partners
- Other Public Agencies in Delta
- Staff

Actions

The City of Delta's Accessibility Plan focuses on actions that address the six principles in the *Accessible British Columbia Act* of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design. These actions are organized in key focus areas informed by research and input from Delta's Mobility and Accessibility Committee:

Built Environment

The built environment is a key focus area for accessibility. It connects with each of the six principles in the *Accessible British Columbia Act* and impacts the everyday

life of people with disabilities as they connect with the community. The built environment impacts an individual's independence, can accommodate their needs, and provides the basis for fostering engagement in the civic, economic, and social facets of the community.

Preventing and removing barriers in the built environment, including transportation infrastructure, public facilities, and public spaces is essential for promoting accessibility throughout Delta. The built environment can also include development and design; items for which the City's Mobility and Accessibility Committee has provided important input.

Actions:

- Continue to ensure all City of Delta buildings and facilities are accessible
- Continue to apply for available grant funding to support universal design improvements
- Continue to make public spaces accessible
- Continue to prioritize timely snow removal, particularly in locations of concern for people with different abilities
- Continue to prioritize the design and implementation of infrastructure that supports mobility and accessibility
- Explore opportunities to partner with agencies, organizations, businesses, and residents to create strategies and actions to promote accessibility for businesses

- Continue to seek the advice of the Mobility and Accessibility Committee on the design of key projects and major development applications
- Apply an accessibility lens to transportation infrastructure projects and transportation plans

Governance and Services

The governance and services focus area addresses challenges that people with disabilities can face participating in local government and public life, accessing services, and being part of events and discussions that help shape Delta's future. Ensuring people with disabilities are fully included in local governance and service delivery helps inform better and more inclusive decisions while allowing the City of Delta to learn from the diversity of voices in the community.

Actions:

- Continue applying an accessibility lens when developing, delivering, seeking input on, and promoting City services that accommodate different abilities
- Continue to develop, deliver, and promote integrated and adapted recreation programming for the community that accommodates different abilities
- Develop communication materials that support a variety of formats and mediums for city information, services, and programs

- Apply an accessibility lens to updates and renewals of major City of Delta planning documents
- Continue to provide training for City of Delta staff on delivering accessible customer service and best practices for serving and accommodating people with different abilities
- Ensure the City of Delta’s website and associated online assets continue to meet recognized accessibility standards
- Continue to engage people with disabilities, the public, local organizations, businesses, City of Delta staff, and members of the Mobility and Accessibility Committee in the design of new services and programs
- Continue to work with accessibility-focused organizations to develop, deliver, and promote accessible services and programs
- Continue to provide public feedback options that accommodate people with different abilities
- Ensure that Council and public committee meetings continue to be accessible
- Continue to provide accessible Seniors Bus services throughout the City of Delta

Leadership and Collaboration

The City of Delta is uniquely positioned in the community to act as a local leader on accessibility and to foster collaboration around accessibility issues.

Collaborating with individuals, agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders to improve the lives of people with disabilities can yield lasting positive impacts for the entire community.

The City of Delta also has a role to play in educating its employees and providers to develop skills and standards to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers in programs, services, and projects.

Actions:

- Continue offering training opportunities for staff to increase organizational knowledge and understanding about accessibility issues and how to foster a welcoming environment for people with disabilities
- Investigate, review, and implement resources and processes to support and coordinate corporate accessibility efforts, projects, and programs
- Continue to engage and collaborate with local agencies and organizations working in the accessibility field to gather insights and lived experiences from people with different abilities to inform future work

- Continue increasing public awareness about mobility and accessibility challenges through public awareness campaigns such as during National AccessAbility Week
- Continue seeking and implementing feedback and recommendations from the Mobility and Accessibility Committee on issues within the Committee's mandate
- Publicize accessibility efforts and investments made by the City to lead by example and build awareness of accessibility
- Make accessible employment documents and information available to local businesses for their own use
- Continue to support and promote external employment opportunities in Delta for people with different abilities
- Continue to promote neighbours helping neighbours through initiatives and programs such as the Snow Angels program

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Among the City of Delta's overarching core values, diversity, equity, and inclusion play a vital role in improving accessibility in the community. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are concepts that embrace the entire community while amplifying the voices of minority and under-represented segments of the population. Including diversity, equity, and inclusion as a focus area for actions within this Accessibility Plan effectively addresses the six principles in the *Accessible British Columbia Act*.

Actions:

- Follow the ‘nothing about us without us’ approach to accessibility
- Continue to demonstrate diversity, equity, and inclusivity in City publications and materials
- Include representation from minority groups on the Mobility and Accessibility Committee
- Continue to seek out and amplify diverse voices in the disability community to inform decisions and actions
- Consider accessibility improvements through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens
- Continue to support employees and prospective employees with different abilities

Responsibilities

The City of Delta’s Accessibility Plan is overseen by Council and adhered to by City staff. The City Manager holds responsibility for the overall direction of staff in accordance with the Accessibility Plan and will operate at the direction of Council with input from the Mobility and Accessibility Committee. At their discretion, the City Manager may assign the responsibility for implementing various aspects of the Accessibility Plan to specific staff members.

Reporting

The City of Delta's Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every three years in accordance with the *Accessible British Columbia Act*. Updates will be informed by input from the Mobility and Accessibility Committee and the public through the Let's Talk Delta engagement platform or other means of public engagement. The Accessibility Plan will be a standing item on the Mobility and Accessibility Committee's agenda.

Updates on the Accessibility Plan will be provided to the public the City of Delta's online assets and via Council through reports submitted by the Mobility and Accessibility Committee as appropriate. The frequency of these reports will be annual or as deemed appropriate by the Mobility and Accessibility Committee and Council.