



## **SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**December 9, 2024, 11:00 a.m.**

**Gibsons and Area Community Centre, Room 209, 700 Park Road, Gibsons, B.C.  
and via Zoom**

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**CALL TO ORDER – 11:00 a.m.**

### **AGENDA**

1. Adoption of Agenda

### **MINUTES**

2. Minutes of the October 21, 2024, Sunshine Coast Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Page 3

### **REPORTS**

3. Where are we in the process – Staff presentation
4. Environmental Scan – Staff Presentations Page 9
5. Working Groups - Chair
6. Accessibility Barriers and Opportunities on the Sunshine Coast update – Staff presentation Page 35
7. Consultant Update – Staff presentation
8. Update on Let's Talk Page – Staff Presentation
9. Next Steps

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

10. Kate Turner, Assistant to the Director of Instruction for  
Inclusive Education, School District 46  
Regarding School District 46 Accessibility Planning

Page 37

## **NEW BUSINESS**

11. Next Meeting – District of Sechelt

## **ADJOURNMENT**



## SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**OCTOBER 21, 2024**

HELD AT THE GIBSONS COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 700 PARK ROAD AND VIA ZOOM

<b>VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Chair	W. Conway
		R. Kiewirz
		B. Straw
		S. Tompkins
		E. Eaton
		A. Lattanzi
		A. Gursche
<b>NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>		Melyssa Verhoeven (Youth rep)
	Councillor, TOG	D. Croal
<b>REGRETS:</b>	Member	L. Forrest
	Member	D. Dutto
	Member	K. Cramer
	Councillor, DOS	A. Toth
	Director, SCRD	J. Gabias
<b>STAFF:</b>	Corporate Officer, TOG	R. Anderson
	Staff, TOG	K. Thomas
	Staff DOS	M. Stjepovic
	Staff SCRD	R. Porte
	Recorder	L. Evanson

**CALL TO ORDER** Bill Conway, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 am and acknowledged traditional lands of the Squamish Nation, sharing his gratitude.

**INTRODUCTIONS** A round table of introductions was completed by those present in person and via Zoom. It was noted that committee member, Klara Cramer, resigned from the committee via email prior to the meeting.

## **AGENDA**

### **Recommendation No. 1**

Moved/Seconded

THAT the agenda be amended to add two items. Firstly, to discuss the replacement of our resigned committee member, and secondly, to discuss establishing working groups.

AND THAT the October 21, 2024 agenda of the Accessibility Advisory Committee be adopted as amended.

**CARRIED**

## **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

### **Recommendation No. 2**

Moved/Seconded

THAT the September 23, 2024 Sunshine Coast Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes be approved.

**CARRIED**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Where are we in the process?**

Town of Gibsons Planner, Katie Thomas, provided a brief history of the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee's work to date. She advised this is our 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional meeting. Our goal is to create a Regional Accessibility Plan and Vision. Today we will be looking at current barriers on the Sunshine Coast.

A spreadsheet has already been created and will be actively added to and managed by Rebecca Porte. Barriers can be added by emailing them to [legislative@scrd.ca](mailto:legislative@scrd.ca). Each local government is to complete an Environmental Scan, which will be shared with the committee at a subsequent meeting.

The committee openly discussed some barriers currently in mind. These items include:

- Infrastructure and Public Facilities need to be barrier free for one and all up front, not an after thought; universal design
- Providing training and education within local government departments. For example, the Rick Hansen foundation
- Having an accessibility lens within plans
- Building codes and Bylaws should be aligned between jurisdictions

## **Public Engagement**

The Committee discussed ways to receive public engagement. It's important to voice your real-life barriers and every opportunity should be taken to do so.

The following items were suggested:

- 'Let's Talk' page – Could send out a newsletter sharing this page for local accessibility barriers. Could share the committee background, timelines and an engagement section with a survey, map or questions. Our plan is required to have an ongoing feedback mechanism.
- Signs and posters at notice boards and in schools with a QR code to access 'Let's Talk' to voice personal barriers on the Sunshine Coast
- Could have a platform that allows to upload photos of the specific barrier: MAP- "Map Accessibility Photos"

## **Grant Applications**

The committee discussed different grant applications that may be available. These include SPARC; an Accessibility Awareness Day event, Rick Hansen Accessibility education training, BC Vision 0; Road safety grant application and Disability Alliance of BC (DABC); \$3500 available for each jurisdiction. The previously applied for Age Friendly grant was unsuccessful.

## **Replacement Accessibility Advisory Committee member**

Klara Cramer advised the committee of her resignation prior to today's meeting. Katie Thomas advised the committee is still within the allowable number of members, but we can advertise for another. Bill Conway asked that a letter is sent to Klara from the committee thanking her for her input and participation thus far.

## **Breakout Session – Accessibility barriers and opportunities on the Sunshine Coast**

The Committee broke out into two groups to discuss current barriers being faced by them on the Sunshine Coast:

- Wider sidewalks and improved orientation. These same concerns were noted in 2008 and are still present today
- Crosswalks where needed

- Barrier free aspects upfront, not an after thought/retrofit
- Training and education within local government
- Honorariums for enlightening barriers on a case-by-case basis
- Accessibility lens within our local governments
- Loss of employment – many places are inaccessible with stairs and no accommodation to work from home.
- BC building codes and bylaws to include accessibility. Update CSA standards to ensure accessibility
- Bylaws limiting ‘home based businesses’ discriminate against those unable to leave the house to go to work
- Coastal ride share; need accessible van on weekends, not party van
- Advocate for better Handydart service. Only operate from 9-4 on weekdays with no dispatch system. Subscribed users get priority. Taxi-saver program provides discounted taxi rides up to \$80.00 per month but does not help those in economic distress.
- Accessibility parking should always come with curb cut
- BC Ferries and wheelchairs; staff training on loading, ships designed with accessibility lens, no transportation via HandyDart to the ferry terminal
- Accessible pedestrian signals (APS) at every light. Only 1 in 7 lights in Gibsons has an APS system
- Are there plans in place to aid in the evacuation of people with disabilities during an emergency event? Are evacuation facilities on the coast accessible?
- Yellow painted curbs and steps; need to be maintained
- Both Sunshine Coast theatres are not accessible. Must sit sideways or in aisle
- Trails need to be maintained so they can be accessed by all. Expand list of accessible trails
- Inglis trail is too steep and dangerous
- Hough Rd trail is filled with roots, hard to navigate
- Cannot access the crosswalk buttons at Pratt Rd and Hwy 101
- Gibsons Community Centre; Tsunami Hockey; removed handicap spaces and hard to access event tickets
- Hockey Arena: When ice is removed, there’s a ramp used for access. Both arenas share a ramp, so the space isn’t always accessible
- Elphinstone school elevator is old and scary and requires a staff key to use
- Elphinstone school wheelchair button on door doesn’t consistently work
- All along the highway, the shoulder is narrow or nonexistent. Should have a sidewalk for pedestrians
- Advocate for TRAC and trail builders
- Sprockids trail: yellow barricade blocks out wheelchair access

- When barriers are mentioned, those complainants feel like villains. Would be nice to have support when requesting improvements, strength in numbers. Break this attitudinal behaviour
- Could come up with events to showcase how it feels to have to navigate communities' current barriers
- Sharing a list of accessibility guidelines to share with builders and developers
- Having a list of accessible housing units available to rent or purchase
- Sunshine Coast resource centre; advocate for more advocates. Only 1 on the coast with a huge case load
- Advocate for funding for local grants to retrofit accessibility improvements to personal property to enable people to stay in their homes
- Local government services and meetings aren't accessible. No closed captioning or hearing loops at Council meetings or at the front counter (TOG and SCRD)
- Town of Gibsons parking lot is inaccessible to Handydart
- Ensure all local government services are available online or by phone not requiring an in person visit
- Train staff to provide as much information over the phone as possible

### **Working Groups**

The Committee discussed working groups going forward. The working groups will come up with recommendations and ideas to bring forward to the Committee.

- Awareness Day event– Lynne Forrest, Ellen Eaton, Rose Kiewitz, Sarah Tompkins, Marina Stjepovic and Councillor Croal
- Emergency Response Plan – The Sunshine Coast Regional District has an emergency response representative. This representative should be invited to a subsequent meeting to present
- Transportation – Ellen Eaton, Bill Conway, Anna Lattanzi, Angie Gursche. To have a future discussion with Rob Ringa from BC Transit

It was discussed that a Representative from Emergency Response to be invited to the next meeting. The working groups will not meet prior to our next Committee meeting.

### **NEXT MEETING**

#### **Recommendation No. 3**

Moved/Seconded

THAT the next Sunshine Coast Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be hosted by the SCRD and be held during the first week of December depending on HandyDart availability.

**CARRIED**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Recommendation No. 4**

Moved/Seconded

THAT the October 21, 2024, Sunshine Coast Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned at 12:08 pm.

**CARRIED**

# Environmental Scan – District of Sechelt

## Background:

### **What has been done in the past?**

Accessibility challenges have been addressed on a case by case basis. The District's Age Friendly Plan provides guidelines for inclusion of all ages in specific and general areas. All Ages and Abilities has been a principle in the OCP and other high level plans, including the Transportation Master Plan 2009, as well as the current draft TMP.

### **How have Accessibility Committees worked with your organization previously?**

The District of Sechelt had an Accessibility Advisory Committee from 2008 to 2018 with the following mandate:

“To provide advice to Staff and Council on issues related to improving access and inclusion in community affairs for all residents. The Committee will provide recommendations to Council on subjects as reducing barriers and creating improved access to District buildings, parks, etc. for people with mobility impairments and ways to increase involvement and participation of people with mobility and other functional challenges in community life.”

The Committee received referrals from development applications and District projects and brought forward many recommendations regarding District roads, sidewalks, parking lots, facilities for areas where accessibility could be improved across the District of Sechelt. Physical accessibility was the primary focus of the past accessibility committee.

The Committee was instrumental in the production of the Age Friendly Plan that was produced by the seniors planning table, providing insight and advice in many areas.

The Committee made many recommendations to Council through the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee that were endorsed and implemented. Many of the recommendations from the committee were not formally endorsed by Council, but were implemented because they were already included in the District's standard practices, required by Provincial or Federal legislation, or were already included in the project for design reasons.

The Committee dissolved in 2018 for various reasons. Without a formal accessibility committee to refer projects and applications to, District staff often reach out to accessibility consultants and people with lived experience to help ensure facilities, roads, sidewalks, parks and other District assets are as accessible as possible.

### **What is being done now?**

The District of Sechelt implements accessibility standards as required by provincial and federal legislation (e.g. adaptable for accessibility and as part of federal and provincial engineering and building codes.) The District also follows best practices with respect to accessibility, even if they are not required by legislation and continues to reach out to accessibility consultants and people with lived experience to help ensure facilities, roads, sidewalks, parks and other District assets are as accessible as possible.

### **Are there existing plans that incorporate much of what will go into your plan? (avoid re-inventing the wheel)**

ISCP

OCP

Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan

Age Friendly Plan

October/November 2024 - The District of Sechelt conducted a preliminary audit of accessibility. In the future, the District may wish to conduct a more detailed environmental audit of its facilities and lands. Marina met with staff from all departments to develop a customer/employee experience summary, what do we do now, where is the potential for improvement. Below are the notes. SCRAAC could inform future improvements.

**Human Resources** - Examine staff on-boarding and training materials if there are attitudinal barriers. The District of Sechelt's hiring and training procedures have been updated to include some wording about equal opportunities. However a further examination for accessibility barriers could be undertaken. Awareness training for SMT, Managers, and staff would be helpful. Staff training on attitudinal barriers, common assumptions, how these affect organizational culture and fair delivery of services, etc. would be very insightful.

**Employee expectations** – To do the job required, how does DoS deal with heavy or any lifting, aging considerations, or any impairments.

**Accessibility Policy** - Staff feel that policy guidance would be helpful. This would also address when and how much DoS takes action on and how we deal with conflicting priorities. (e.g. upgrade all doors to push buttons, but they tend to get vandalized over and over – are there new technologies?). How do staff know when to upgrade/implement services that are “accessible to all”?

**Phone system** - The recent switch to digital (Teams) phone system has some challenges, could be more user-friendly for phone calls and transfers, etc. Adjustments with “accessibility” in mind would provide better service. Staff could use training on/provide feedback to improve the phone tree system.

**Equipment** - Portability of payment machine, if we could take it outside when people can't get into the elevator, that would help.

**Website** – how to report a problem is one example of difficulty in navigating the website for some with technical barriers. Adjustments with “accessibility” in mind would provide better service. Continual feedback and staff training on navigating the challenges, and offering feedback and support would be helpful.

The District of Sechelt's website [www.sechelt.ca](http://www.sechelt.ca) was revamped in 2023 and achieves **LEVEL AA**:

Website accessibility compliance is typically measured against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which have three levels of conformance:

- Level A: This is the minimum level of accessibility and includes the most basic web accessibility features.
- **Level AA: This is the mid-range level and includes all Level A and AA requirements. It is the most common target for organizations as it addresses the major accessibility barriers.**
- Level AAA: This is the highest level of accessibility and includes all Level A, AA, and AAA requirements. It is the most comprehensive but can be difficult to achieve for all content.

Most organizations aim for Level AA compliance to ensure their websites are accessible to a broader audience, including people with disabilities.

The Bang the Table websites (Let's Talk SCRD/ YourSaySechelt) exceed the [WCAG 2.1, the current global web accessibility standard](#).

Consider conducting a website accessibility audit if online interactions are essential to our service delivery.

Capital works/disruptions should be communicated on a calendar/dashboard readily accessible to all.

**Facilities, Entrances /exits** of municipal hall - times that we open doors to which areas (including library and accessible washroom) could be clarified for the public. Elevator times should be posted to our website. Front door of hall needs a push button for those with physical barriers. Rockwood and other municipal facilities should be assessed for approach (ramps, railings not to code, what materials are

used, heights and widths of doors, etc.) What are the appropriate standards? Pathways and landscaping approach to RCMP should be assessed or feedback provided by those with visual or mobility challenges, there are guy wires and tree branches in the way. There is no elevator to Justice building. What happens for accessibility during emergency evacuations? Facilities – general conflict in priorities – safety vs. security, vs. accessibility. We should have a map of all accessible facilities including washrooms. Door handles are gradually being replaced with levers – is this better? Municipal main door upstairs can take effort to open due to pull from HVAC system. Arts Ctr is owned by DoS, should DoS be responsible for providing accessible parking for staff leasing the building, and who enforces how that space is used? **Signage** – Accessible signs, what standard should they be? If braille, then ensure signs are low enough for all to reach.

**Staff communications** - staff awareness about use of ‘jargon’ could help to improve communication with the public, especially neuro-diverse individuals who may not communicate in the same way. In particular, jargon associated with planning (what is an OCP, how is it different than a zoning bylaw, why it matters and how it affects residents/applicants – use clear plain language. Same for finance jargon. What is the respectful way to communicate with people, and those with impairments in particular? Assess Council meetings for accessibility in civic politics. Is it OK for staff to ask people to come in to pick up paper copies of materials?

ASL training for someone on staff to be able to communicate with those who have hearing barriers.

**In the workplace** - Markers on offices/cubicles to indicate how staff prefer to interact with other staff.

**Sounds** – Can be loud at front counter, also loud from back of office. Investigate options for lessening sounds in the workplace, like humming or open/loud talking. Can be overload for some public (staff estimate this to be an issue about 2 times per month, or once per week, and during tax time once per day.

**Furniture** – Good to have some chairs. Extremely heavy chairs at front public computer. Wheels are not steady. (Chair replaced already).

**Lighting** - replace fluorescent/bright lights, reduce flicker (e.g. Community meeting room has fans spinning underneath the light fixtures), provide adequate lighting for staff workspaces.

**Public sidewalks** – prune branches regularly.

**Right of ways** – DoS does not have a policy that they should be maintained to a certain standard.

**Public washrooms and hydration stations** – should there be more of them, is this seen as a service?

**Parks trails** – master plan has standards, it would be good to get feedback from SCRAAC. Examples of “accessible trails” exist in Kinnikinnick Park, Hidden Grove. Recent multi-use paths at Crowston trail the design standards got reduced due to high cost overruns.

## **SCRD Environmental Scan Summary Results**

### **Customer Service - In person and virtual**

Location(s): Field Road SCRD Office, Rec centers, Phones, Online, Parks/trails

The SCRD has multiple modes of interaction with the public, including in-person at the Field Road office, phone, online, at recreation centers, in parks, or at community meetings.

#### **Barriers**

- No standards/procedures on how to provide service without barriers.
- No specific training currently offered to staff on how to provide a service that supports people with disabilities.
- Some departments provide more accessibility options than others for the public to interact with SCRD Staff.
- Limited support tools in place.

#### **Improvements to consider:**

- Standards/procedures can be developed.
- Staff training
- Front counter accessibility audit for Field Road office.

#### **Questions for further exploration:**

- Are there best practices elsewhere for public-facing staff that can be referred to?
- Is there specific training available that could be applied?
- Would a front counter accessibility audit of Field Road and other sites be valuable?

### **Front Counter Physical Infrastructure**

Location(s): Field Road Office, Rec Centers

SCRD operates front counter services at its main office on Field Road as well as the Rec facilities at Sechelt Aquatic Centre, Gibsons and Area Community Centre, Gibsons Aquatic Centre, Sechelt Arena, Pender Harbour Aquatic and Fitness Centre.

#### **Accessible Considerations in Place:**

- Automatic front doors, accessible washroom facilities, some lower counter heights.

#### **Barriers:**

- Field Road does not have lower counter heights or options for someone sitting.
- No support tools in place (ie iPads), if helping a customer who needs to sit or be lower than counter height and see a screen.

#### **Improvements to consider:**

- Front Counter area accessibility Audit for Field Road to develop strategic priorities plan for improvements

## **Cemeteries**

Location: Seaview Cemetery

SCRD operates the main cemetery on the Sunshine Coast. This service includes maintaining the cemetery, providing burial services, and future planning.

### **Barriers:**

- The topography of the cemetery itself has imbedded challenges in providing accessibility.
- no parking or outhouse facilities that are accessible.
- the pathways have not been improved to an accessible standard.
- There are roadways through the cemetery that allow for improved access.

### **Improvements to consider:**

- Future planning for the cemetery may use an accessibility lens to consider accessibility in any improvements that are made.

### **Questions:**

- No accessibility audit has been done, so specific information is not available on barriers and opportunities.

## **Transit**

Where: **Coast Wide**

SCRD transit system is affiliated with BC transit. Buses Leased. Province funds 2/3, SCR D 1/3. Two types of transit are offered – conventional (big buses) and handyDART (smaller/custom transit). Level of service – conventional is 20 hours per day seven days a week, with handyDART 9:30am-5pm, 7 days a week.

### **Accessible considerations in place:**

- Big buses are equipped with wheelchair access ramps.
- 2 spots are available for wheelchairs/scooters – improved wheelchair docking stations/securement systems.
- HandyDART buses have ramps (no lifts), are customized for accessibility needs.
- Early next year will be offering communications with clients re: handyDART (no show, late cancellation, cancel at the doors, subscription vs casuals, booking etc)
- Included on buses – next bus stop displayed; onboard announcements made
- Info: Passengers can go on mobile to get real time updates for all SCR D conventional transit bus routes. During inclement weather updates in real time.
- Text to speech navigation function on the smart phone app.

**Barriers:**

- HandyDART demand exceeds service. On average every 4<sup>th</sup> day, one new client is registered for HandyDART.
- Limited accessible infrastructure. Even though there are ramps on buses and handyDART, the roads are lacking sidewalks – which makes the ramp deployment challenging and makes the ramp slope very steep. This can be a safety issue for passengers with walker, scooter, wheelchairs, cognitive issues or balance challenges.
- Tactile pavements not present.
- Inadequate/insufficient transit service. – The demand is higher than the available service. Public engagement last November 2023 – well attended (worked with SLT, BC Transit) – based on the feedback, the handyDART service was increased – implemented in September 2024.
- Communication Barrier – info about routes, schedules etc, not always available in accessible formats – larger print, improved font/size, electronically, braille...
- Training both for staff and clients - insufficient

**Improvements that may be helpful to consider**

- Outside speaker – Some transit system has installed outside speakers to announce bus arrival – e.g. Route number 7, to Ferry terminal.
- Tactile tiles at the edge of the platform. We don't currently have. Some stops would be good to have them (e.g. at Cowrie Street).
- Tactile tiles as guidance system for visually impaired – from bus stop at Cowrie St. – tiles can take people to main entrance to mall
- Online booking system
- Improved info access
- Increased service
- Customer training: Customers who would like their freedoms but don't know how (bigger North American transit systems have this program, "Travel Training Program – a 4-hour course"). Clients to attend a classroom session with their companion and then to the bus stop for in-field hands-on training on how to take the conventional bus – the course is usually conducted by transit company's training staff.

**Staff Training that currently happens re Transit:**

- Staff is trained on customer service, speaking with vulnerable group of people, how to be empathetic, how to be responsive and to take extra time... Drivers also get refresher training when time/staffing permits – In Nov 2023 public consultation

sessions, SCRD handyDart drivers received very high praises for their professionalism, kindness and going above and beyond. Staffing issues limit how often training can happen. Service coverage must come first. Staff, driver, dispatch, supervisors. Visible and invisible disabilities. How staff can respect. Treat people well. Take the extra time.

### **Recreation Facilities and Programs**

Locations: Sechelt Aquatic Centre, Gibsons and Area Community Centre, Gibsons Aquatic Centre, Sunshine Coast Arena, Pender harbour Pool.

SCRD Recreation provides facilities and services on the Sunshine Coast. This includes aquatic facilities, arenas, multipurpose spaces, gyms, and various program offerings.

#### **Barriers:**

- Lifts at aquatic facilities: People need to come with their own helper for lift assistance (staffing levels limit the amount of help staff can provide)
  - GAP if Aquatics can't assist in lesson or if caregiver is unable to assist with the lift
- Unsupervised spaces (ie gym) can have accessibility barriers if things are left out of place by users.
- Offerings around programs/services that are accessible to people with sensory issues are limited.
- Accessible programming materials
- Handrails GDAF – treading path
- Arena inaccessible (Sechelt), GAAC arena has accessibility challenges.
  - Feedback – changes to the accessible viewing area in GAAC, although professionally planned, still leave accessibility barriers.
- Some upgrades here and there for automatic doors (but still many more needed)
- No specific programming or times offered to people with brain injuries (who may be very sensitive to busy environments)
- Way finding – visual impairments (finding elevator and accessible washroom location)
- Moving around weight room could be challenging – especially if others leave things out (unsupervised space)
- GACC, GDAF, PHAFC Front counter high for wheelchairs. SAC ok, not sure about SCA
- GDAF some handrails through change rooms but not all the way through – some with mobility concerns asked for a traction path through change rooms and out on pool deck (may not be able due to cleaning).
- GDAF – lever handles especially on family room doors
- GDAF very narrow walkway around far side of the pool

#### **Accessibility Considerations in place:**

- Attendant policy – on web. If someone needs assistance, attendant comes for free
- LIFE – leisure involvement for everyone – financial assistance program
- Grant 2013 accessibility grant: access for pool – improved lifts and tracks installed (all pools), accessibility doors
- Weight rooms – one piece always in place in gyms specific to people in wheelchairs
- Training – piecemeal – basic training module for recreation front counter desk (Unconscious bias training)
- Programming for adults with dev disabilities – underserved population
- Sunshine Shack – (coffee cart at GACC) – run by the Gibsons family network who support/hire those with developmental disabilities -integration into the community.
- Aquatic accessibility work was done in 2012 (lifts and tracks installed in change rooms and between pools/hot tub etc.) – see accessibility page on website: <https://www.scrd.ca/accessibility-resources/>
- At least one piece of Fitness equipment available for those in wheelchairs at all gyms + plus free weights/ high bench
- Most washrooms have accessible toilets stalls/grab bars and mirrors/handwashing for those in wheelchairs
- Accessibility resource page on SCRD Website with Info.
- Programming for adults with developmental disabilities at GACC (adapted fitness circuit, music exploration, others)

### **Improvements that may be helpful to consider**

- Accessibility Audit would be valuable – to assess priorities and develop plan in strategic way for improvements
- Further develop staff training on accessibility, barriers, ways to help. (Unconscious bias training, etc)
- Increase accessible programming (e.g. sensory sensitivity like noise, lights etc)
- Generate accessible program materials, information and ensure people with varying abilities are represented in communications

### **Questions for further exploration:**

- Website/ACTIVE net process for those with various disabilities
- Program participation is accessible (programs are offered by SCRD staff and Contracted instructors).
- Could an accessibility audit of our facilities be a valuable first step?

### **Parks**

Locations: SCRD Parks and Trail network - Electoral Areas

SCRD Parks provides parks, trails, beach accesses, playgrounds, and sports fields facilities within the Electoral Areas of the SCRD. These include larger parks with amenities, such as Shirley Macey/Soames and Cliff Gilker, as well as smaller trails within communities.

## **Barriers**

- Geography – Not all parks are well suited for accessibility
- Spread out nature of the parks
- Lack of strategy at this point in terms of deciding priorities.
- Finances – no funding in place specifically for accessibility upgrades
- Not a defined service level
- Bits and pieces, not cohesive

## **Accessibility Considerations in Place**

- With new projects, accessibility is a criterion that gets considered.
- Some project proposals including baker beach, halfmoon bay hall, cooper green, Chaster house include accessibility improvements.

## **Improvements that may be helpful to consider**

- Improvements in signage – to make them more accessible (more visual icons, height adjustments, colors)
- Development of a strategy for prioritizing accessible experiences (beach accesses, park trails, facilities, locations)
- Staff training

## **Ports**

SCRD Operates and maintains 9 docks located within west howe sounds and Halfmoon Bay

## **Barriers:**

- Nature of the infrastructure have inherent challenges in terms of accessibility– tides, slopes, age
- No guidelines
- No improvements have been made that are specifically towards improved accessibility

## **Questions for further exploration:**

- Are there best practices?

## **Solid Waste**

SCRD oversees curbside pickup of garbage and food waste within the electoral areas. As well, operate the Sechelt landfill, Pender harbour transfer station, and SCR D green waste site.

## **Barriers:**

- Nature of the sites limit accessibility

- Remote location of the Sechelt landfill
- Require public to offload their own waste – can be a challenge
- Gravel site can be difficult for mobility challenges
- Uneven ground going into mattress storage area
- Marine depot has step
- Guardrails and lock blocks are high
- Getting bins to curb can be an issue (no pull up service)

#### **Accessibility Considerations already in place:**

- Phone app provides residents with reminders – can be a phone call, text message.

#### **Improvements that may be helpful to consider**

- Drop pad option
- Chute system
- Improvements to brochures/information

### **IT , Meetings, Communications, Billing**

#### **Barriers:**

- No digital strategy
- Development applications – cannot do online submissions, track status online.
- Billing: no support for visual impairment – no braille, no audio options when they receive bill
- No meeting accessibility standards

#### **Accessibility considerations in place**

- Meetings: improving audio visual equipment which will allow better and clearer ability to follow meeting minutes and video online
- Community meetings uploaded to youtube. Has Closed captioning
- Recollect app, ability to set up and pay dog license and utility bills online
- Good web mapping – ESRI ability for people to see info about their property and the region
- Ability to work online and from home
- Brand Style Guide – section on language emphasizing using plain language, as well as use of colors (contrast). Could be further reviewed for accessibility related improvements.
- Website meets WCAG 2.1 accessibility guidelines

#### **Accessibility improvements that may be good to consider**

- Browse aloud on website
- Create accessibility standards for meetings

## **SCRD Building Department**

Provides advice, inspections and permitting for those looking to build within the regional district. Bound by SCRD Zoning Bylaws and other regulations including provincial regulations. Administers the regulations as laid out in the building code, to ensure compliance. New buildings (non-single unit) have regulations around accessibility.

### **Accessibility considerations in place:**

- Front counter hours mean that staff are available to talk with the public in person
- 8/5x11 fillable forms
- Staff who are working at the higher levels of building department are trained on the code and accessibility requirements.

### **Questions or future improvements that may be good to consider:**

- Not sure if there are barriers experienced by people with visual/hearing or other impairments when accessing our forms/website etc? And what options may be there to improve accessibility.
- Staff training skills to increase awareness and understand options could be valuable.

## **Human Resources Department**

### **Barriers:**

- Interview Process – if the interview is at Mason Rd, it is not physically accessible to people with some mobility challenges (steep stairway to room). No process currently in place to identify if people have specific accessibility requirements while booking interview (to ensure interview location is suitable).
- Field Road Washrooms – non-automated door, sink issue

### **What Accessibility Considerations are in place:**

- Duty to accommodate (both provincially mandated as well as within union agreement)
- Policy on non-discrimination (SCRD)
- With staff already in place – accommodate as accessibility needs come up
- When hiring new staff – reasonable accommodation (must be able to reasonably fulfil the duties of the job)
- HR downloads, (now citation Canada) – there are trainings available for staff re accessibility (Rec has front counter staff do the training)

### **Additional Areas that would be good to explore:**

- Are there “best practices” for creating an accessible application process?
- Explore opportunities for training for staff that interact with the public (front counter, Cemeteries, billing etc) around accessibility.

## **Planning**

**Barriers:**

- Front counter at Field Road – no lower section
- Limitation of IT capabilities – egs- cannot host hybrid meetings at community halls, Individuals cannot log in to see where their application is at.
- Not clear whether public info meetings are actually accessible. Not currently imbedded into planning of the meeting. Hybrid could be helpful.
- Attitudinal barriers. Difficult to manage for when processes are at a public meeting phase. would benefit from a checklist of requirements to ensure that attitudinal barriers are not impacting the meetings.

**Upcoming projects/initiatives that may have accessibility considerations:**

- Official Community Plan (OCP)– themes in OCP including equity, transportation, mobility, parks, recreation.

**Emergency Program**

The SCRD through the Sunshine Coast Emergency Program is the lead agency for emergency Management on the Sunshine Coast. The other local gov't bodies on the coast have joined SCRD to be part of one integrated emergency program.

**Resources in Place**

- Various resources on SCRD website about emergency planning and preparedness. Some specific to people with accessibility needs. Some general for residents of BC and some specific to residents within the SCRD.
- Voyent Alert system – multipurpose communication service to send alerts during events like earthquakes fires or floods. Offers email, text, or voicemail alerts.
- Personal Emergency Plans. SCRD Can provide workshops/talks for information purposes and to help with planning tools.

## Town of Gibsons Environmental Scan

### Policy Review

This Policy Review looks at 3 main Plans/Bylaws which shape the way the Town of Gibsons operates and grows.

1. 2023-2027 Strategic Plan
2. The Official Community Plan
3. The Active Transportation Plan

The **2023-2027 Strategic Plan** was adopted in 2023.

There are four priorities:

- Leadership
- Affordability
- Livability
- Natural Assets

The Strategic Plan has a social equity lens, which states that the Town will always consider how government policies, Town processes and priorities, and community input and representation should promote the interests of all our stakeholders, not just those most advantaged. In response, Council and staff will redefine public service to seek to redress the growing gap in inequality by ensuring the needs of our more disadvantaged residents—including those who face challenges such as homelessness and/or mental health, low-income seniors, youth, working families, people with disabilities, renters and others—are considered and addressed, especially in regard to housing.

Under Goal 4 an object is: Help to complete the regional Accessibility Plan as mandated by the provincial government.

**The Official Community Plan** was adopted in 2015

The OCP does not currently have a goal to become “barrier free”, instead it focusses on general community safety.

**Staff Recommendation:** The OCP is in the process of being updated. This is an opportunity to engage residents with lived experience and look at the future of the Town of Gibsons through a “barrier-free” lens.

Key sections that emphasize health, housing and moving through the Town have been provided below.

#### Section 8.5 - Health, Safety and Well-Being

Policies 8.5.1 Prioritize a safe, comfortable walking environment by locating higher density housing and senior’s housing and housing for families close to amenities, creating better pedestrian environments in Upper Gibsons, improved pedestrian connections between Upper and Lower Gibsons and overall a more comfortable pedestrian environment (also see Commercial and Servicing sections).

8.5.2 Encourage other forms of active transportation such as cycling, skateboarding etc. by creating safe, comfortable environments for these modes.

8.5.3 Cooperate with the RCMP to become more informed about how crime can be prevented through building and landscaping design, and encourage crime prevention through design techniques. This may be accomplished through a public awareness campaign and/or through the establishment of an advisory design panel to review development applications.

8.5.4 Work with the RCMP to improve personal safety by encouraging residents and neighbourhoods to participate in crime prevention programs such as Block Parents, Neighbourhood Watch, Citizens on Patrol, and/or Crime Stoppers.

8.5.5 Continue to liaise with private and public agencies to provide for the needs of people with disabilities. Buildings that provide a public service shall be made fully accessible for people that have a physical or mental disability.

8.5.6 Consider the preparation of data and indicators on the quality of life of its residents. Collaboration between municipal departments and other agencies involved in social planning initiatives shall be encouraged. This may include a community safety audit.

8.5.7 Continue to work with the multicultural community to promote harmonious intercultural relations.

8.5.8 Support the work of the Community Resource Centre's Progress Plan to create greater opportunities for women in the workforce along with improved access to childcare and transportation.

8.5.9 Address the need for shuttle service between Upper Gibsons and Lower Gibsons especially for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

8.5.10 Encourage projects, initiatives and funding that support youth staying on the coast by providing opportunities for youth including education (e.g. trade, art and marine science schools), training, practicums, and apprenticeships.

8.5.11 Recognise the fundamental importance of a secure home for physical and mental well-being and support the provision of affordable and attainable housing (see "affordable housing policies" in Housing section.)

8.5.12 Consider implementing a bylaw to regulate smoking in public places.

8.5.13 Advocacy Policy: Encourage the provision of a walk-in clinic in Gibsons with extended hours and more GPs.

### Section 12.4 - Sidewalks and Pedestrian Environment

- Ensure that the Town's transportation system emphasizes the creation of a safe, supportive environment for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.
- Reduce the impact of traffic on local residential areas through suitable road and subdivision design.
- Develop a continuous, integrated bicycle and pedestrian network for both recreation and transportation purposes.
- Provide a high standard of public roads which meet the vehicular movement requirements of the Town's residents and visitors

### Section 9.4 - Affordable and Alternative Housing

9.4.1 Revise the zoning bylaw to establish base and maximum densities for all residential zones. The Town will also clarify amenity contributions requested of developers for any density beyond that of the base density.

9.4.2 Support multi-unit and seniors housing developments which are an integral part of the community, with site designs which balances the need for privacy and security with the need to retain an attractive streetscape and sense of "fit" in the neighbourhood.

9.4.3 Facilitate the development of a full range of special needs housing for seniors and persons with disabilities and consider land designated as Medium Density and High

Density Residential for these uses. Homes that require continual medical care 24-hours a day should be directed to land designated as Public/Community Use.

9.4.4 Support the provision of seniors housing and related services, which encourages independent living in a support setting, such as congregate housing development. Housing units for seniors should be adequately designed for special needs and include a variety of affordable units that are based on the “aging in place” concept.

9.4.5 Ensure that affordable housing units or complexes are integrated in the community and not segregated or concentrated in specific areas.

9.4.6 Support initiatives which help provide affordable housing in the community, including:

- Provision for housing mixed with commercial development which can create some lower-cost apartments.
- Lands acquired by the Town may be conveyed to a registered non-profit for the purpose of affordable housing.
- Facilitate the development of affordable housing through considering actions such as fast-tracking the development process, waiving development cost charges, leasing or contributing land, reduced parking requirements for developments with an affordable component etc.
- Review and update the current Community Amenity and Affordable Housing Policy to reflect a change to a density bonusing approach to affordable housing.
- Continue to develop partnerships for the establishment of new affordable housing and protection of existing affordable housing in the Town of Gibsons.
- Work with other Sunshine Coast local governments, as well as Provincial and Federal Governments to address affordable housing regionally.

9.4.7 Promote the use of the Accessible and Adaptable Housing Design Guidelines (February 2012), encouraging architects and builders to consider accessible and adaptable features in developments.

### Section 12.3 – Parking

12.3.6 Make sure accessible parking is wide enough and on level grades so getting into and out of vehicles is as easy as possible for persons with disabilities.

The **Active Transportation Plan** was adopted in 2024.

The Active Transportation Plan aims to improve walking, cycling, and rolling connections and make active transportation a more comfortable and convenient option for people of all ages and abilities. The ATNP will help the Town prioritize investments and decision-making around active transportation improvements.

The Plan has four themes:

- Connected
- Safe
- Equitable
- Convenient

*Action 6.1 Use a universal accessibility lens and review current best practice design guidance during planning, design, and construction.*

The Town will apply a universal accessibility lens when considering, planning and implementing projects (new infrastructure and infrastructure upgrades) to identify and understand:

- The impacts on persons with disabilities.
- Potential barriers created within the process and/or the design.
- Steps to address potential barriers or remove existing ones.

*Action 6.2: Use outreach and engagement strategies that are inclusive and collaborative.*

Removing participation barriers to community engagement can foster greater inclusivity allowing for more diverse perspectives to be a part of the decision-making process.

*Action 6.3: Consider supporting regional Active Transportation groups that includes diverse representation.*

Including various regional groups with diverse representation will ensure that representative voices are a part of the decision-making process as the ATNP is implemented. This can include inviting members from the Regional Accessibility Committee and the Sunshine Coast Youth Council members are invited as stakeholders for projects and initiatives to ensure there are accessibility and youth perspectives as a part of the decision-making process.

### **Town Hall Building**

A number of barriers were identified at Town Hall, and therefore it has its own section to avoid duplication.

#### **Barriers Identified:**

Parking lot is sloped, making it difficult to reach the building.

Handydart cannot maneuver into the parking lot if other vehicles are parked

Main door to building which is predominately used to access for Council Chambers and ICBC has an automatic opener however the main access to the Town Hall counter does not

No accessible washrooms

No sharps containers

Carpeted floors can be difficult for wheeled devices

Only meeting room is Council Chambers, no automatic door

Most staff offices are downstairs, in order to navigate the building without stairs you need to go outside and around.

Alarm system and AED installed at a high height

Fluorescent lighting

#### **Improvements that would be helpful**

Building Audits are necessary on all Town facilities to prioritize upgrades for both community members visiting and employees working.

**Department:** Administration (Front Counter)

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

First port of call for information in person , via phone or email, payment of property taxes and utilities, preparation of Council and Health and Safety agendas, receive development applications and payments.

Website updates, communications, social media.

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

1. A section of the counter has been lowered
2. Computer provided for public use

**Barriers**

Front door for the Town Hall side does not automatically open

Website is difficult to navigate for all

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Website audit
- Hearing loops
- Magnifier glass dome for residents to use

**Training that would be helpful**

- Unconscious bias training

**Department:** ICBC (Front Counter)

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

Drivers Services, Insurance, Driver testing centre

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

1. New camera equipment for driver licensing
2. Staff read theory questions and scribe if required
3. Automatic front door
4. Staff have large computer screen to aid vision
5. Staff have a scanner to scan driver license bar codes

**Barriers**

Desk counter is too high, staff often need to walk to the other side of the desk if the client can't reach.

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Policy to prevent overbearing perfume/smells
- Hearing loops
- Water fountain for water bottles
- Update lighting for staff

**Training that would be helpful**

- Unconscious bias training
- First Aid
- Neurodiversity training
- Sensitivity training

**Department:** Corporate

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

Council coordination, Council and Committee of the Whole meetings, IT services, Policy development, Bylaw development, FOI, Legal agreements and registration, Communications, Website, Public Notices,

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

Council Meetings recorded and accessed via YouTube, closed captioning available

Agenda and minutes can be accessed in a HTML format

**Barriers**

Website has multiple platforms and therefore is difficult to navigate.

See barriers in Town Hall above.

**Improvements that would be helpful**

Hearing loops in Council

**Training that would be helpful**

- Unconscious bias training
- Neurodiversity training

**Questions**

Are Council minutes and agendas readable for screen readers?

**Department:** Infrastructure Department

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

Development Coordination, Servicing Agreements, Encroachment Agreements, Capital Projects, Infrastructure Planning and design, Water modelling, Drilling Permits, Grant funding for infrastructure improvements, Urban Forest Plan, Tree Protection Bylaw, foreshore and riparian improvements, natural asset management

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

**Barriers**

- Bylaws and standards may be outdated with current provincial standards
- Provincial grant funding requirements differ from Bylaw standards meaning that there isn't a consistent standard through Town (i.e. for intersections)
- Budget can limit projects.

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Accessibility consultant to review Highway Use Bylaw and Subdivision and Development Bylaw
- Inventory areas of highest need to budget improvements requirements

**Training that would be helpful**

- Unconscious bias training

**Department:** Human Resources

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

Recruitment and Selection, employee engagement, people policy development, payroll and benefits administration, health and safety including accommodation support, training/development and coaching, culture branding, employee communication, orientation and onboarding

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

**Barriers**

Information barriers – all communication currently online

Postings all in PDF format and “hidden” in Town webpage

Most employee communication throughout cellphone

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Develop an accommodations request procedure
- Provide support with training and extend time with onboarding
- Develop visual procedure manual
- Reintroduce mentorship program for new employees
- Provide easy access computer literacy skills training
- Update all computers to prevent screen glare
- Develop safety procedures with both audio and visual alerts

**Training that would be helpful**

Unconscious bias

**Questions**

How can we improve job post visibility to ensure the Town reaches a more inclusive audience?

**Department:** Planning, Bylaw and Building

**Location:** Town Hall

**Services Provided:**

Development Applications, Subdivisions, Property and development enquiries, Policy and Bylaw Development, staff reports, identify new Road Dedications/ Pedestrian Right of Ways, Public information sessions, Public Notices, Grant applications, Building Permits, Health and Safety, Bylaw enforcement, Animal Control, Parking, Boats – untethered/derelict, recreational water lease, Noise control,

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

Can provide information in a variety of formats

Will scribe application forms

**Barriers**

Jargon and process can create barriers for applicants and community members

Public Hearing procedure can be confrontational, which can lead to community members not participating

Bylaws and Plans all in PDF and “hidden” within website

Council meetings do not have closed captioning when attending in person

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Official Community Plan Update to advocate for accessibility and inclusivity improvements for private and public development

**Training that would be helpful**

Neurodiversity training

**Department:** Parks

**Location:** Parks Yard, School Road

**Services Provided:**

Maintenance of playgrounds, sports fields, green parks, trails, gardening, beach accesses and foreshore. Remove Town garbage, washrooms, facilities, street trees, sidewalk clearing/snow/ice and leaves along high priority streets. Street sweeping

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

Staff observe

**Barriers**

No accessible playground for children in Town

Topography of the Town

Beach access currently inaccessible to a large majority

Level of service and budgetary issues

Parks Yard offices and lunch room is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> storey

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Update the standards for trails
- Develop accessible trail from Upper to Lower Gibsons
- Develop boardwalk to Breakwater beach
- Develop a Parks Master Plan

**Training that would be helpful**

Mental health first aid

Unconscious bias training

Violence in the workplace

**Questions**

Level of service questions – need top-down leadership

**Department:** Public Works

**Location:** Top Yard, Henry Road

**Services Provided:**

This is a high level overview: Sidewalks (prune, installation and concrete repair), roads, signs, drainage, trails, water mains and metres, sewer mains, stormwater, complete deficiencies for new projects, landscaping, snow and ice vehicle maintenance.

**Accessibility Consideration in Place**

Staff inventory sidewalks monthly

Staff often observe community members experiencing challenges on sidewalks or through trails and try to repair as quickly as possible

**Barriers**

Lack of general maintenance

Current tactile pads are extremely slippery and require replacement

Private hedges and grasses encroaching onto sidewalks

Lunchroom and office space on 2<sup>nd</sup> storey of building

**Improvements that would be helpful**

- Fines for parking on sidewalks
- Inventory let downs that are at a 45 rather than a 90
- EPS on all traffic lights
- Cohesion between departments

**Training that would be helpful**

Mental health first aid

Neurodiversity

ASL introduction

Would be interested to hear from or shadow individuals with lived experience so that employees can make more informed decisions when inventorying Town assets

**Action**

Need a criteria to help prioritize work

# Sunshine Coast Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee

## Barriers and Opportunities    November 2024 - FOR REVIEW

Draft working List of barriers and opportunities from committee brainstorm sessions and emailed submissions. Have not yet been prioritized toward the Accessibility Plan for SCRD, TOG, DOS

Topic	Barriers	Opportunity	Notes	Theme	Govt Body
Handy Dart - Service Expansion	Outdated booking system requires lots of time and staff resources, additional funding may be needed for increased service levels. Dispatching system is required to organize trips for all. Includes subscription trips and requests for ongoing trips to meeting, work related trips. A third bus is needed . no handydart to ferry	Additional hours, or the ability to request special trips outside of regular service hours would be helpful. Advocate for increased service.	Ellen and Sherry have both received a "no" response from Transit. A Working Group could be established to identify needs/demand, available resources, funding sources and then make recommendations to Committee to make recommendations to all three jurisdictions		
Handy Dart - Taxi Saver Program	Sunshine Coast Transit doesn't currently have this program. Recent study indicated there is an unknown latent demand for HandyDart service. People don't know about it or how it can be used.	TaxiSaver Program allows HandyDart customers to buy half-price taxi vouchers for times when the HandyDart is unavailable	Would allow for a more flexible and convenient bus service and attract more customers.		
Accessible Affordable Housing (adaptable at minimum)	Need data: – how much demand is there on the Sunshine Coast (is this included in the housing needs assessment or Vital Stats report?); What is currently required for new developments or other regulations? How does the new provincial housing legislation affect access to housing for who with mobility challenges?	Need more Accessible Affordable Housing on the Sunshine Coast	In progress: Regarding affordable accessible housing demand: Affordable housing expert Matt Thompson of Urban Matters provided a summary of Stats Canada 2021 noting for Sechelt that: • 5,110 households in Sechelt total • 1,705 where at least one person has a physical activity limitation (1,405 owners, 300 renters) • Of the 435 total households in core housing need, 115 households had a physical activity limitation (60 owners, 50 renters, randomized rounding eliminates the other 5 households that would total the 115). o This would represent the need for affordable accessible housing. Although core housing need doesn’t always mean 1:1 units (i.e. not every household experiencing core housing need needs a new unit, they are all experiencing housing need and require some form of housing support). More work to answer this question fully and for the entire Coast. Would likely need some budget to investigate. An inventory of buildings on the sunshine coast with available suites, accessible and affordable suites is needed. A list of individuals that would represent the audience where marketers could reach out to them for applications.		
Accesssible housing		Could use a list of accessible housing units available to rent or purchase			
Accessible Housing - Universal Design					
Accessible Housing - Universal Design	The SCRD Building Inspection Department "builds sector knowledge" with priorities "energy efficiency and the reduction of greenhouse gases". Doesn't include accessibility.	Make accessible housing a priority in Building Inspection and Planning in local governments. Train civic employees on accessibility and universal design throught the Rick Hansen Foundation Professional Certification training program.	Knowledge in the Building and Planning Departments of local governments would better inform local builders and tradespeople of opportunities to improve accessibility in their work.		
Contact list/newsletter? A way to reach people					
Emergency response	oWho is reaching out to those with disabilities when an emergency hits? oWhat is the plan for evacuation of disabled people in an emergency? Who’s responsibility is this? Are evacuation facilities accessible?	Ensure people with disabilities are include in emergency responses	Preparedness for those with disabilities - plans for floods, fire , earthquakes etc. Environmental scan?		
General infrastructure		barrier free should be considered and implemented upfront, not afterthought			
Building codes and bylaws	Bylaws limiting home based businesses discriminate against those unable to leave the house to go to work. When barriers are mentioned, those complainants feel like villains. Would be nice to have support when requesting improvements, strength in numbers. Break this attitudinal barrier	Building codes and bylaws to include accessibility lens. Update CSA standards to ensure accesibility			
Building		Could have a list of accessibility guilelines to share with builders and developers			
Home based business bylaws					
General Attitude					
General local govenment		accessibility lens Within local governments			
General local govt services		Ensure all services are available online or by phone, not requiring in person visit	Train staff to provide as much info over phone as possible		
Training for service personel		Implementing training programs for staff within local government			
Getting TO events	Training for service personnel. She explains her situation to people letting them know that she has a cochlear implant and reads lips but sometimes people don't respond that well. She needs people to speak with clarity not louder and to always look at her when they are speaking.				

accessibility at events			
access to the pool		Wheelchair tilted chair always broken, only one accessible change room	
Gibsons Arena	Tsunami Hockey removed handicap spaces and hard to access event tickets. When ice is removed, there is a aramp used for access. Both arenas share a ramp, so the space isnt alwasy accessbile.		
Accessible Parking		Should alwasy come with curb cut	
Parking at TOG offices	Inaccessible to HandyDart		
APS systems are not consistent	- different numbers of beeps - can't reach the crosswalk button from a chair - not enough time to get across street - islands at hospital are too high , only 1 in 7 lights in gibsons has APS system		
sidewalks and potholes		Wider sidewalks and improved orientation. Same concerns noted in 2008.	
Crosswalks	Cannot access crosswalk buttons at Pratt Rd and HWY 101	crosswalks where needed	
Cosmetics - eg. trim branches on shoulders		Yellow painted curbs and steps, need to be maintained	
Trails		Trails need to be maintained so they can be accessed by all. Expand list of accessible trails. Inglis trail too steep and dangerous. Hough road trail filled with roots.	
Sprockids (SCRD)	Yellow barricade blocks out wheelchair access		
beach accesses	not accessible with chairs		
Disability Awareness day		A day for people to walk in someone else's shoes	
Awareness		Could come up with events to showcase how it feels to have to navigate communities current barriers.	
Online accessibility - govt websites	some parts not accessible	format must be consistant and adaptable for screen readers	
Hearing impairment support	Challenge participating in meetings or interacting with front desk staff	Installation of "Hearing Loops" (audio induction loops), provide a magnetic, wireless signal that can be picked up by cochlear implant or hearing aid. For council chamber can be added to audio system (5500-8000). Service counters can be added, costing 750-1500. <a href="http://www.getinthehearingloop.ca/technology">www.getinthehearingloop.ca/technology</a>	
Board and Council meetings - local govt	Not accessible to hearing impaired	Closed captioning or hearing loops at council meetings, scrd meetings and front counters	
Honorariums		Provide honorariums on case by case basis for enlightening on barriers.	
		accessiblity lens wihtin local governments	
<b>NON-Local Gov't related:</b>			
accessibility of businesses - eg. hair salons			
hospital accessibility		not accessible ith chairs	
Poverty			
BC Ferries		Staff training on loading, ships designed with accessibility lens	
Accessibility for hotels			
Movies	She enjoys going to the movies at the Gibsons Play House but only went to the foreign films since they had subtitles. As she knew one of the board members there she mentioned her situation and now all movies shown there have subtitles. A success story. However the theatres are not accessible. Must sit sideways or in aisle.		
accessibilty and employment	Many places are inaccessible with stairs and no accommodation to work from home		
Coastal ride share		Needs accessible van on weekends, not party van	
Elphinstone high school	Elevator is old and requires a staff key to use, wheelchair button on door doesn't consistently work.		
Highway	Along hightway the shoulder is narrow or nonexistent. Should have sidewalk for pedestrians		
TRAC and trailbuilders		Could advocate to them for accessible considerations/planning	
Sushine coast resource centre	Only one advocate	Advocate for more advocates	
Personal property retrofit funding		Advocate for funding for local grants to retrofit accessiblity improvements to personal property to enable peopel to stay in their homes.	

**From:** Kate Turner <[kturner@sd46.bc.ca](mailto:kturner@sd46.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 25, 2024 1:37 PM  
**Subject:** School District 46 Accessibility Planning  
Good afternoon Mr. Conway,

I hope this message finds you well.

On behalf of School District 46, I would like to share an update on the important work being undertaken by our district concerning accessibility planning. In the spring of 2023, we established an Accessibility Advisory Committee aimed at thoroughly exploring the accessibility needs across our district. Our objective is to develop a long-term plan that effectively addresses these concerns, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate in our educational opportunities.

The committee is actively seeking feedback from the community to better understand the diverse needs of individuals with various disabilities, including those that are physical, sensory, cognitive, or related to mental health. To facilitate this process, we have created an accessibility feedback mechanism for students, families, staff members or community members who are either living with a disability or supporting someone who is. The feedback form is accessible at the bottom of our dedicated webpage.

Aligned with the goals outlined in the Accessible British Columbia Act, our committee has prioritized the following areas:

**Priority 1 | Information Gathering**

- Assess and gather information in relation to current accessibility barriers within our district. This information will be provided to the Advisory Committee through surveys, working and focus groups, and online feedback forms.

**Priority 2 | Service Delivery**

- Incorporate a holistic approach to promoting awareness, professional learning, education and staffing in School District 46 to ensure an accessible and inclusive environment for all individuals.

**Priority 3 | Infrastructure**

- Systematically upgrade School District 46's facilities and infrastructure ensuring they are accessible, fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals with disabilities can navigate and utilize spaces with ease and dignity.

**Priority 4 | Transportation**

- Ensure that transportation services provided by School District 46 offer accessible, safe and reliable options for students and staff with disabilities.

**Priority 5 | Safety**

- Prioritize safety for all members of the School District 46 community by addressing accessibility challenges and ensuring a secure and inclusive environment.

The committee includes representatives who reflect the diverse experiences of individuals with disabilities, as well as the broader community within School District 46. Under the leadership of Christa Rive, our Director of Instruction for Inclusive Education, the committee plays a crucial role in continuing to inform the accessibility plan. This plan will identify and address various barriers that impede participation in our educational environments.

Meetings for the current school year are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, October 1, 2024
- Tuesday, December 3, 2024
- Tuesday, February 4, 2025
- Tuesday, April 1, 2025

For ongoing communication and feedback, we encourage community members to visit our engagement platform at <https://yourvoice.sd46.bc.ca/accessibility-committee>.

I have attached our current plan for your reference.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like further information about our accessibility initiatives.

Warmly,

**Kate Turner** (she/her)

**Assistant to the Director of Instruction for Inclusive Education**  
Inclusion Support Services  
**School District 46 – Sunshine Coast**



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We acknowledge with respect and gratitude the unceded lands and waters – the Temíxw of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and the swiya of the shíshálh Nation, where we learn, collaborate, and journey together.