

2024 Accessibility Progress Report

Introduction

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA), started in 2019, aims to make Canada free of barriers by January 1, 2040. It focuses on removing obstacles in jobs, buildings, and transportation. The City of Prince George supports the ACA's goals through efforts like the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion, accessible transportation services, and working with groups like the Rick Hansen Foundation to ensure everyone can participate fully.

This progress report shows how the City of Prince George is keeping its promises and making progress in accessibility.

Our work so far

Accessibility at the City has can be broken down into the following sections:

- Policies
- Programs
- Practices
- Services

Policies

In 2011, Prince George City Council approved the City's [Workplace Conduct](#) and [Equity and Inclusion](#) policies. These documents state the importance of dignity, respect, the removal of barriers, and preventing barriers at the City.

In 2022, Council adopted the Communications policy which included clear and accessible communication as a guiding principle when working with the public.

The City also makes ongoing efforts to implement the Accessible British Columbia Act in its regular practices.

Practices

In 2023, the City created an [Accessibility Work Plan](#) for the years 2023-2026 complete with targets, plans, and assessments.

The City of Prince George is one of eight communities in British Columbia selected by the [Rick Hansen Foundation](#) to improve accessibility for residents with disabilities through the [BC Accessibility Grants Program](#).

- Rick Hansen Foundation will provide Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) ratings for three City facilities and provide funding for accessibility improvements.
- City staff will receive accessibility awareness training and learn how to perform RHFAC ratings on the remaining City facilities.

Programs

One of the City of Prince George's key goals is to provide affordable and accessible housing. Through the Accessible Housing Program, the City works with developers, builders, and residents to reach this objective by offering resources to help with the construction of accessible homes in Prince George.

For residents with permanent physical disabilities, the City provides an accessible garbage collection program where City staff assist by moving bins on the resident's behalf.

The Leisure Access Program (LAP) provides opportunities for residents with limited income to participate in a variety of aquatic activities. Leisure Access participants receive limited free swimming, with discounted swims after free swims are used, and discounts on programs such as swimming lessons.

Services

The City and BC provides accessible services to residents:

1. handyDart

The handyDART is a door-to-door, shared transit service for people with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using regular transit services

without assistance. The handyDART picks passengers up from and drops them off at accessible points.

2. BC Transit fixed-route buses

BC Transit's fixed-route buses provide scheduled service to major destinations and residential areas at scheduled times. The buses can accommodate people with mobility devices in the form of courtesy seating and ramps to ensure disabled passengers can get on and off the bus safely. Low-floor buses are also able to "kneel" to lower the entry point while smaller "Community Buses" can accommodate up to two mobility devices on-board, including wheelchairs and most types of scooters. Benches at the front of fixed-route buses can also be raised to allow mobility devices to safely strap in.

3. Accessible Voting

All voting locations are accessible for people with disabilities or mobility devices. Voters who find it challenging to enter a voting location may request a ballot brought to them in the parking lot or curbside by an Election Official.

Voters unable to mark their own ballot or who require a translator may ask an Election Official, friend, or relative for assistance. Anybody assisting an elector filling out a ballot will be required to sign a Declaration of Persons Assisting an Elector to Mark a Ballot Form.

Consulting persons with disabilities

To consult persons with disabilities on accessibility policies, programs, practices, and services, the City has an Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion. The committee has members from many backgrounds with targets to:

- Have at least half of its nine appointed members be persons with disabilities, those who support persons with disabilities, or those who have an interest and/or experience in diversity and inclusion.
- Reflect the diversity of persons in Prince George.

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion aims to remove any physical

or social barrier which prevents full participation by residents in all aspects of community life. The Committee seeks to advise Council, increase public awareness, and collect feedback on accessibility issues including those affecting people with mobility devices, seniors, and the general public.

Using feedback

The City of Prince George has created a system for getting public feedback on accessibility. This feedback will help update the Accessibility Work Plan (AWP) every 3 years. To give feedback on the AWP or report an accessibility problem, you can use the following options:

- Provide feedback in person at the City Hall Service Centre on the 1st floor of 1100 Patricia Boulevard.
- By Email to 311@princegeorge.ca
- By phone to 311 or 250-561-7600.
- Through the web using our Service Requests app.

Feedback may be provided anonymously over the phone in general, by using a temporary email address for email, or partially in person by not giving a name. Responsibility for feedback received is given to the staff liaisons of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion.

Personal information is collected by the City of Prince George for the purpose of feedback confirmation under the authority of section 26(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Personal information is not collected when submitting feedback anonymously, and any personal information collected will be considered confidential.

If you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the City of Prince George at 1100 Patricia Boulevard, Prince George, BC, by telephone 250-561-7600, or email 311@princegeorge.ca.

Web Accessibility

This document and the City of Prince George follow web accessibility best practices with a minimum level of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) level AA.