

ACRD Accessible BC Act Opportunities

S6	Services and Assessments: Review current processes for completing ACRD assessments (e.g. Childcare Needs Assessment) and drafting plans (e.g. Official Community Plans, Parks & Trail Plans) to better consider and incorporate the unique needs of people with disabilities.
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ACRD Accessible BC Act Opportunities

#	Opportunities: Employment
EM1	<p>Accommodations Policies, Internal: Develop a comprehensive accessibility accommodations policy and process for ACRD employees. Ensure that the policy and process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects best practices and legal requirements • Has clear guidance on timelines for fulfillment of accommodations (if any) • Outlines expectations for both employee and employer • Includes clearly designated process owners for the accommodations process.
EM2	<p>Training and Awareness: Source and deliver practical training on accessibility to all employees. In addition, identify learning needs and deliver training specific to job requirements. For example, accessible customer service training for people interacting with community members, accessible engineering standards (e.g trail standards) for those involved in infrastructure development; etc. This training is intended to reduce attitudinal barriers across the ACRD broadly, as well as better equip staff to incorporate accessibility into their specific job functions.</p>
EM3	<p>Recruitment and Hiring: Conduct an accessibility review of recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes for ACRD jobs.</p>
EM4	<p>Consulting: Develop and implement a mechanism to gather the perspectives and experiences of employees with disabilities about accessibility across the ACRD's operations. This should be a mechanism that protects their confidentiality but also allows for meaningful discussion. Ensure there is a method for recording, responding to, and/or actioning this feedback.</p>

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#	Recommendations: Emergency Services
ES1	Notifications: Review accessibility of emergency notification systems and make improvements to their accessibility. Continue to prioritize notifications that are communicated in plain language and to use multiple formats including digital and land line. Communicate accessibility improvements that are currently being made to NextGen911.
ES2	Public education: Incorporate accessibility into emergency planning public education campaigns including how residents and visitors with disabilities can access emergency services and how neighbours can support fellow residents with disabilities in the event of an emergency, as well as about the importance of visual and auditory alarms in key spaces. Also important is educating community members about what role those with disabilities play in their own emergency preparedness.
ES3	Emergency Plans: Review and update (or develop if not already available) emergency plans and include provisions for supporting people with disabilities in an emergency.

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#	Recommendations: Information and Communications
IC1	<p>Guidance: Include accessibility as part of ACRD communications and engagement policies. Include guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility best practices for social media communications (e.g. alternative text, camel case hashtags, plain language, video captions) • Website accessibility (e.g. Let’s Connect page) • Creating accessible documents shared internally with employees (e.g. presentations and meeting agendas), and public facing documents such as Official Community Plans, and online resources. • Newsletters and forms • Language and tone used to speak to/ about people with disabilities (e.g. speaking TO people, not just ABOUT them). <p>Ensure that when updating or developing these policies that consideration is given to both accessible formats and accessible and inclusive channels of dissemination.</p>
IC2	<p>Language: Continue efforts to revise high priority public communications (e.g. public website) into plainer language. Begin drafting all new communications, both public and internal, in plainer language. Support these efforts with guidance on plain language best practices, as well as with training for relevant staff on how to write in plain language effectively.</p>
IC3	<p>Websites: Conduct a digital accessibility audit of public websites and web systems. Incorporate feedback from these audits when making updates and improvements to websites. When updating websites or creating digital tools like external online payment systems, consider working with a digital accessibility specialist and engaging in user-testing to validate accessibility of these systems.</p>
IC4	<p>Training: Source training on accessible communications best practices and have relevant staff complete training. Note that relevant staff may not just be communications personnel, but anyone who has a role in creating content that is shared with staff</p>

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	<p>or community members. Training may be related to social media best practices (e.g. alternative text, closed captions, camel case hashtags); writing in plain language; sourcing and providing alternative format documents upon request; creating digitally accessible documents and resources, etc.</p>
IC5	<p>Meetings: Develop guidelines for meeting accessibility, both for in-person and virtual meetings. Consider all-staff training on meeting accessibility, including how to use virtual meeting platforms in accessible ways, how to provide accommodations in meetings, and how to prepare and circulate accessible meeting materials.</p>
IC6	<p>Dissemination: Develop relationships with service provider and stakeholder organizations and leverage the existing relationship with the accessibility advisory committee to help disseminate relevant communications to ensure that important and relevant information is reaching residents with disabilities including through the use of video messaging. Ensure that the methods of communication are accessible and inclusive (e.g. older populations with lower tech literacy may prefer in-person or print communications).</p>
IC7	<p>Formatting: Explore the cost of providing publicly available documents in multiple formats (e.g. braille, large print, ASL) upon request. Source vendors to fulfill these services. Prioritize disability organizations who offer these services.</p>

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#	Recommendations: Transportation
T1	Prioritizing accessibility: When planning transportation projects, ensure accessibility is a key consideration. This can be captured through works in progress where accessibility has already been included, such as Active Transportation Plans and Parks and Trails Plans. Prioritize plans that address known accessibility barriers or provide significant upgrades to accessibility and increased safety.
T2	Involving People with Disabilities: Involve people with disabilities in the planning and design of transportation-related projects.
T3	Sourcing Expertise: Source vendors with expertise and experience designing and building accessible spaces by including accessibility as a project parameter in Request for Proposals (RFPs).
T4	Knowledge Building: Source and implement training for relevant transportation staff (e.g. accessible customer service for transportation service providers.)
T5	Expanding Service: Continue to liaise with BC Transit to determine ways to fill gaps and expand service for people with disabilities.
T6	Airport Accessibility: Identify short and long-term accessibility improvements to the airport terminals. Identify and apply improvement funding sources to understand which standards are applicable to meet or exceed with best practices in accessibility.

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#	Recommendations: Buildings, Infrastructure, and Public Spaces
BE1	<p>Assessing for Accessibility: Review all public sites for accessibility barriers. Note the status of accessibility and establish a priority list for addressing barriers. See on-site report and determine which locations need a closer technical inspection based on priority and determine what low-cost changes can be made more rapid prior to larger budget discussions.</p>
BE2	<p>Planning for accessibility: When making plans for renovations, updates, or construction of ACRD buildings and facilities, prioritize accessibility from the earliest stages of planning. Consult people with disabilities in the planning and design of these spaces. Investigate and pursue grant opportunities for infrastructure works.</p>
BE3	<p>Planning framework: Develop a standard process for staff involved with designing new ACRD buildings, facilities, and public spaces, including when and how to integrate accessibility in planning and projects.</p>
BE4	<p>Signage: When updating or replacing non-regulatory ACRD signage (e.g. recreational signage; information about public bathrooms), integrate accessibility features into new designs. Accessibility features include things like plain language, easy-to-read font, visual cues, and tactile signage. Include information that describes the level of accessibility and types of accessibility features present in the space.</p>
BE5	<p>Closing Gaps: For the ACRD office, prioritize making high priority accessibility improvements. In particular, apply for funding or allocate budget to improve the accessibility of the front entrance, accessible parking, path of travel to entrance, and signage.</p>

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BE6	Planned and future improvements: Consider which public spaces are due for maintenance, renovation, or replacement. Make plans to incorporate accessibility improvements into those changes. Start with no/low-cost changes being explored like signage, and consider what changes can be made during routine maintenance of public spaces (e.g. switching pathway materials from wood chips to quarter down).
BE7	Mitigate impact: For spaces that are known to be inaccessible and are important spaces in the community (e.g. firehall), but which are not due for renovation or replacement, make plans to reduce gaps and maximize accessibility of that space. For example, accessible parking signage and exterior pop-up voting spaces.

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#	Recommendations: Procurement
P1	Policies: Update procurement policies to incorporate accessibility considerations where applicable, for example when are where accessibility considerations should be applicable, and to what extent. Consider including accessibility statements into the social procurement section of Request for Proposals.
P2	Guidance: Develop guidelines for procuring items related to accommodation needs, for example ergonomic office furniture, adaptive devices, or assistive software. Develop this in concert with the accommodations policy under the Employment section of these recommendations. Make clear who is involved with the process, how an accommodations request for procurable items is made, approved, and fulfilled, how items are chosen, and the timelines for fulfillment in procuring those items.

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#	Recommendation: Increasing Awareness and Reducing Attitudinal Barriers
AW1	<p>Public education and awareness: Develop and launch a public education campaign on accessibility in the ACRD aimed at both residents and the business community, including things like why it is a priority for ACRD, how ACRD is taking action towards accessibility (e.g. through its Accessibility Plan; the formation of the accessibility advisory committee), and how community members can engage with the ACRD on accessibility (i.e. through the feedback mechanisms established in accordance with Accessible BC Act requirements). This can include social media messaging, dedicated webpages to accessibility, columns in community newsletters, and postering. The purpose of this is to raise awareness around accessibility, reduce attitudinal barriers to disability, and give a forum for engagement around accessibility.</p>

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Barrier/ Opportunity	Area	Source (or example)	Comments	Opportunities #
Accessibility in planning documents is sometimes unclear/ undefined	Built Environment	West Coast Cycling Network Plan		BE4; S6
Workplace noted to be not physically accessible in all cases.	Built Environment	Employment Roundtable Interview	See built environment report.	BE1; BE2; BE6
ACRD and residents ACRD building entrances and side entrances that were problematic in terms of accessibility, including counter heights and rest rooms in multiple locations.	Built Environment	Built Environment Round Table Interview; Public Survey	See built environment report.	BE1-BE8
Noted generally that there is a large number of opportunities to improve accessibility in parks however budgeting has been restrictive on potentials	Built Environment	Built Environment Roundtable Interview		BE1; BE6; BE7
Fire halls not accessible for multiple reasons for injured fire fighters, for meetings, and for community voting stations	Built Environment	Other Service Roundtable Interview; Public Survey	Fire hall second floor was the predominant issue for accessibility, though bathrooms and other areas also pose barriers. Elevator installation would be a large scale project that may not be feasible for meetings on second level. In terms of injured workers are there accommodations that can be made for light duties that can take place on main level? For voting stations, can ACRD explore the purchase of mobile temporary shelter set ups for pop-up voting booths that don't need to rely on buildings without accessibility?	BE1; BE8
Noted methods of payments for utilities, permit fees, etc. cannot occur in-person in certain instances due to accessibility of ACRD buildings however alternative forms of taking payment do exist over phone or online.	Built Environment	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Building entrances should be prioritized for accessibility, not only for public but also employees.	BE1; BE2; BE6
No documented accessibility and accommodations policies, procedures or reports	Delivery of Services	Client	ACRD is aware that it has no accessibility or accommodation policies for council, committee meetings, etc.	S1, S2, S5
Assessments and plans do not consistently and explicitly consider the unique needs of people with disabilities	Delivery of Services	Child Care Needs Assessment		S6
No explicit consideration of accessibility in emergency Reception Centres; or alerts for deaf/ HOH people). Passive references to people with disabilities.	Delivery of Services	Alberni Valley Emergency Plan; Emergency Support Services; Public Survey	Emergency plan template alert says "Preparing to move any disabled persons and/or children. " Could speak directly to people with disabilities	ES1; ES3; IC1
Noted difficulties in understanding the accessibility needs of new hires.	Employment	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		EM1-3
Noted difficulties and gaps obtaining office furniture and equipment such as sit-to-stand desks and large computer monitors. Accommodation process is also noted as a gap.	Employment	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		EM1
Staff have not yet been encouraged to share their feedback on potential accessibility needs/barriers, nor is there a formal system to report barriers.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		EM4
ACRD does not have any relationships established with local agencies to encourage equitable hiring for job postings.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		EM3
ACRD has no formal accommodation process established for when a formal accommodation is needing to be requested.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		EM1

ACRD does not include an active offer for accommodations in job postings, no formal opportunity to declare if they need accommodations in the hiring process, nor does the on-boarding process involve a formal opportunity to self-declare any accessibility needs required for the position.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		EM1; EM5
Accessibility may be mentioned generally, but is not explained or specific standards/ expectations set about accessible engagement.	Information and Communications	Alberni Clayoquot Regional District Public Engagement Policy		IC1-IC5, S2, S3
Form created for accessibility feedback by ACRD with new opportunity to respond to resident concerns.	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview	Interview with ACRD staff did seem to indicate this feedback system would be widely posted and integrated into communication mediums. In addition to responding to feedback however, tracking of feedback and requests should occur to ensure understanding of priority areas overall.	S4
Noted difficulty in knowledge and capacity on how to create digitally accessible documents and communications and how to properly offer and facilitate requests for alternative formats.	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		IC4 & EM1
Accessibility needs could be improved for public communications through Facebook & Twitter for social media, general news releases and statements, and newsletters.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC1-IC5
Direct outreach with seniors and disability support groups needs to improve as well as communications directed to individuals living with disabilities.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC6
Public Events do not include ASL & alternative forms of information sharing and events directly hosted by ACRD in their own venues could improve in terms of physical accessibility (ie. Firehall locations used for voting).	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		S1-S2; S5; BE8
Training and resources to build accessible communications with the public is needed as the following were identified as gaps by both staff and residents: - Resource checklists for creating accessible comms - Plain language knowhow - Description text for images - Centralize resources could be possible for municipalities for items like a new style guide covering plain language, font, contrast, etc.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC1-IC5
ACRD noted a need for better live streaming equipment for events and meetings	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview		S3
Print media vendors have outdated equipment that produce blurred text.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview	Unsure if this is ACRD or PA Specific	P1
ACRD is working towards removing jargon from public communications, opportunity to improve plain language usage	Information and Communications	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Ensure to include detailed guidelines around public communications on plain language. ACRD Public Engagement Policy mentions plain language but not in a robust way. Does ACRD have a writing style guide that can cover plain language?	IC1; IC2

Opportunity in emergency communication services, next gen 911, and Voyent Alert (Mass Notification alert system) are coming soon to the region.	Information and Communications	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Are these services being robustly tested for multi-faceted accessibility? There should be some provincial support in this area as health is a provincial responsibility.	ES1
ACRD doesn't have large print versions of documents	Information and Communications	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Could be easily converted. May be a good opportunity to hire a summer student with a disability if there are a large number of documents to be converted.	IC1; IC6; IC7
Opportunity in progressing accessibility in ACRD is communicating what ACRD is doing on accessibility and awareness around accessibility issues to the public and business community	Information and Communications	Accessibility Advisory Committee	Public education and awareness: Develop and launch a public education campaign on accessibility in the region aimed at both residents and the business community.	AW1; ES2
Accessibility in procurement needs to become more formalized into the procurement process	Procurement	Staff Interview	In particular for larger projects, concepts like inclusive hiring should be factored.	P1-P2
Accessibility considerations should be more explicitly considered in internal procurement checklists	Procurement	Staff Interview	A distinction was noted during the meeting that some products can have accessibility features included on a case-by-case basis but some products need accessibility factored in like those involving safety and emergency response related elements.	P1-P2
Airport terminals have known accessibility issues	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview	Staff interviewed at roundtable seemed unclear as to which standards should be utilized for future improvements and renovations.	T6
ACRD training on accessibility standards and design capacity seems to not have happened in recent memory.	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview	Based on the interview notes, accessibility does not seem to be engrained in either design knowledge or procurement processes other than referencing made to BC Transit expectations and MMCD, which itself contains gaps on accessibility and needs updating. They can likely use some training in these areas so they know at least what to look for in future improvements to transportation and transportation infrastructure.	T3; T4
Some of ACRD does not have a para transit system like in Port Alberni and the Alberni Valley area. A West Coast Transit service recently started between Ucluelet and Tofino.	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview; Public Survey	Note during meeting of some supportive discussions with BC Transit and District of Tofino for a porter service but nothing system-wide outside of healthcare related circumstances.	T5
ACRD staff that provide transportation don't seem to have training in dealing with members of the public living with disabilities	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview; Public Survey	Basic training could be useful for engaging the public on a daily basis in transportation settings.	T4
A lack of safe and accessible intersections were cited as barriers by residents including poor visibility, long distances across crosswalks, unclear signage, and poor lighting.	Transportation	Public Survey		T1-T4
Some residents cited that bus service is infrequent, inaccessible, and that navigating transportation services is confusing.	Transportation	Public Survey		T1; T2; T5

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#	Recommendations: Services
S1	<p>Accommodations Policies, External: Develop an accessibility policy and corresponding implementation process for municipal events that are open to the public, e.g. council and committee meetings, public engagement sessions, open houses, community meetings, etc. to ensure all municipal events include mandatory accessibility features, such as the ability to join a session virtually; auto captions enabled for virtual sessions and make clear if/what accommodations are available to the public in addition to the regularly implemented accessibility features. Include clear instructions for seeking accommodations, as well as timelines to fulfill accommodations.</p>
S2	<p>Events and Activities: Develop and implement an accessible events checklist or guidance document for use by municipal staff involved in public event planning, as well as local community groups, non-profit, and for-profit businesses and organizations who host events in the community. Ensure this resource is free to use, well-advertised, and easy to find by relevant user groups (e.g. a dedicated tab or page on the municipal website.)</p>
S3	<p>Resources: Investigate costs associated to enhance the accessibility of public events and meetings (specifically, better live streaming equipment that facilitates accessibility; hearing induction loops; high quality microphones). Consider allocating a future budget for the procurement and implementation of these resources.</p>
S4	<p>Community Feedback: Develop and implement a system that allows the public to provide feedback on accessibility in the municipality. Ensure that the mechanism itself is accessible (e.g. written in plain language; compatible with screen readers). Ensure there is a method for tracking, responding to, and actioning feedback.</p>
S5	<p>Budgets & Grants: Include a budget line item that will allow the municipality to support the administration and actions of the Accessibility Committee, as well as to budget for accessibility initiatives that have been prioritized on an annual basis. Review and</p>

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	apply for grant opportunities for high-cost initiatives as well as for staff training.
S6	Recreational Services: Review current recreational services and programs, including how to apply for them, their structure, the physical spaces in which they are offered, and staff training and preparedness around accessibility and accommodations. Develop a plan to address gaps in service that will assist with identifying current needs, i.e. procurement of adaptive equipment, the renovation of old spaces or acquisition of new spaces.
S7	Leveraging existing plans: Leverage the municipality's existing Active Transportation Plan, Corporate Strategic Plan, Uptown Revitalization Strategy, and other relevant plans and content related to accessibility to ensure accessibility is considered and implemented when changes are made to municipal spaces. For example, the Corporate Strategy and Uptown Revitalization Plans make recommendations for affordable housing, which could include accessible housing options for people with disabilities who have a low or fixed-income.

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#	Recommendations: Employment
E1	<p>Accommodations Policies, Internal: Develop a comprehensive accessibility accommodations policy and corresponding process document for municipal employees. Ensure that the policy and process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect best practices and legal requirements • Has clear guidance on timelines to fulfill accommodations (if any) • Outline expectations for both employer and employee • Include a clearly written process to guide employees.
E2	<p>Training and Awareness - Source and deliver practical training on accessibility to all employees. LTRT recommends that disability and accessibility awareness training be delivered to all staff members. In addition, the training should identify learning needs and deliver training specific to job requirements. For example, accessible customer service training for people interacting with the public, accessible engineering standards for planners and those involved in infrastructure development; etc. Specified training will reduce attitudinal barriers across the municipality and will better equip staff to incorporate accessibility into their specific job functions.</p>
E3	<p>Recruitment and Hiring: Conduct an accessibility review of recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes for ACRD jobs.</p>
E4	<p>Consulting: Develop and implement a mechanism to gather the perspective and experience of employees with disabilities on the level of accessibility across the municipality’s operations. This should be a mechanism that protects their confidentiality but also allows for meaningful discussion. Ensure there is a method for recording, responding to, and/or actioning this feedback.</p>

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#	Recommendations: Emergency Services
ES1	Dispatcher and First Responder Training: Source and implement training for emergency dispatch and first responders that accounts for disability. For example, train dispatchers to ask things like, “Do you need to be notified in a specific way when emergency response arrives (e.g. via text, or flashing lights in your window,” or “Do you have specific evacuation needs?”) during emergency calls. Train first responders to respond to accessibility needs accordingly, including communicating with people with disabilities in ways that are accessible and respectful of their dignity.
ES2	Emergency Plans: Review and update (or develop if not already available) emergency evacuation plans for municipal buildings and include provisions for supporting people with disabilities in an emergency.

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#	Recommendations: Information and Communications
IC1	<p>Guidance: Include accessibility as part of municipal communications and engagement policies. Include guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility best practices for social media communications (e.g. alternative text, camel case hashtags, plain language, video captions) • Website accessibility (e.g. Let’s Connect page) • Creating accessible documents shared internally with employees (e.g. presentations and meeting agendas), and public facing documents such as Official Community Plans, and online resources. • Newsletters and forms • Language and tone used to speak to/ about people with disabilities (e.g. speaking TO people, not just ABOUT them). <p>Ensure these policies are considered when updating or developing so that consideration is given to both accessible formats.</p>
IC2	<p>Language: Continue efforts revising public communications (e.g. public website) into plain language. Begin drafting all new communications, both public and internal in plain language. Support these efforts with guidance on plain language best practices, as well as with training for relevant staff on how to write in effectively in plain language.</p>
IC3	<p>Public-facing website: Incorporate accessibility as a high priority item in the municipality’s budgeted 2025 website redesign. Consider working with a digital accessibility specialist and engaging in user-testing to ensure the newly designed website both meets current WCAG standards and is user-friendly for people with disabilities.</p>

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IC4	<p>Intranet: Conduct a digital accessibility audit of internal web systems. Incorporate feedback from these audits when making updates and improvements to intranet. Considering working with a digital accessibility specialist when updating or creating digital tools and engaging in user-testing of these systems to validate their accessibility.</p>
IC5	<p>Training: Source training on accessible communications best practices and have relevant staff complete training. Note that relevant staff may not just be communications staff, but anyone who has a role in creating content that is shared with staff or residents. Training may be related to social media best practices (e.g. alternative text, closed captions, camel case hashtags); writing in plain language; sourcing and providing alternative format documents upon request; creating digitally accessible documents and resources, etc.</p>
IC6	<p>Meetings: Develop guidelines for meeting accessibility, both for in-person and virtual meetings. Consider all-staff training on meeting accessibility, including how to use virtual meeting platforms in accessible ways, how to provide accommodations in meetings, and how to prepare and circulate accessible meeting materials.</p>
IC7	<p>Dissemination: Develop relationships with service providers and organizations to leverage the existing relationship with the Accessibility Advisory committee to help disseminate relevant communications to ensure that relevant information is reaching residents with disabilities including through the use of video messaging. Ensure that the methods of communication are accessible and inclusive (e.g. older populations with lower tech literacy may prefer in-person or print communications).</p>
IC8	<p>Formatting: Ensure that publicly available documents are available in multiple formats (e.g. braille, large print, ASL) upon request. Source vendors to fulfill these services. Prioritize disability organizations who offer these services.</p>

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#	Recommendations: Transportation
T1	Prioritizing accessibility: When planning transportation projects, ensure accessibility is a key consideration. This can be captured through works in progress where accessibility has already been included, such as Active Transportation Plans, and in upcoming work such as the new Transportation Master Plans. Prioritize plans that address known accessibility barriers or provide significant upgrades to accessibility and increased safety for vulnerable road users.
T2	Transportation Master Plan: Prioritize accessibility in the municipality’s upcoming Transportation Master Plan. Include accessibility as a core component of the RFP when procuring services for the development of the plan. Consult people with disabilities in the development of the plan.
T3	Involving People with Disabilities: Involve people with disabilities in the planning and design of transportation-related projects.
T4	Sourcing Expertise: Source vendors with expertise and experience designing and building accessible spaces by including accessibility as a project parameter in RFPs.
T5	Knowledge Building: Source and implement training for relevant transportation staff (e.g. accessible customer service for transportation service providers; accessible transportation and road design for planners and engineers) on how to integrate accessibility into their work.
T6	Expanding Service: Continue to liaise with BC Transit to determine ways to fill gaps and expand service for people with disabilities.
T7	Implement plans: Implement initiatives in the Active Transportation Plan to update “street design standards in the City’s service bylaw” to improve lighting, sidewalk widths, and benches. Consider further implementing the plan to include a sidewalk maintenance plan that includes inspection, defects, obstacles, and prioritizing repairs.

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#	Recommendations: Buildings, Infrastructure, and Public Spaces
BE1	Assessing for Accessibility: Review all public sites for accessibility barriers. Note their status of accessibility and establish a priority list for addressing barriers. See on-site report and determine which locations need a closer technical inspection based on priority and determine what low-cost changes can be made more rapid prior to larger budget discussions.
BE2	Planning for accessibility: When making plans for renovations, updates, or construction of municipal buildings and facilities, prioritize accessibility from the earliest stages of planning. Consult people with disabilities in the planning and design of these spaces. Investigate and pursue grant opportunities for infrastructure works.
BE3	Engineering specifications: When updating municipal engineering specifications integrate accessibility requirements within those specifications.
BE4	Planning framework: Develop a standard process for staff involved with designing new ACRD buildings, facilities, and public spaces, including when and how to integrate accessibility in planning and projects.
BE5	Parks and Recreation: Develop a Parks Master Plan that includes accessibility as a core tenet of the plan. Ensure that accessibility is included in planned park improvements, and that it is considered from the outset in the development of any new parks and playgrounds. Consult people with disabilities in the development of the plan, as well as in the design and implementation of any parks projects taking place.
BE6	Public Engagement and Consultation: Develop and implement a framework for engagement and consultation with people with

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	<p>disabilities for all infrastructure-related projects. Ensure that consultations occur early in the process, and that they are inclusive and accessible. This will help to determine the priority of upgrades and accessibility features in high-use spaces like the hockey arena and community pool.</p>
<p>BE7</p>	<p>Public seating: Increase the availability of public seating (e.g. accessible benches). Ensure that the design and construction of public seating accommodates a range of body types and disabilities, and that the location of seating does not create new barriers. Wherever practicable, clearly identify accessible seating locations on public information kiosks and other wayfinding elements such as point of interest markers and park information kiosks.</p>
<p>BE8</p>	<p>Signage: When updating or replacing non-regulatory municipal signage (e.g. recreational signage; information about public bathrooms), integrate accessibility features into new designs. Accessibility features include things like plain language, easy-to-read font, visual cues, and tactile signage. Include information that describes the level of accessibility and types of accessibility features present in the space.</p>
<p>BE9</p>	<p>Closing Gaps: For spaces that are known to be inaccessible and are important spaces in the community (e.g. tennis courts; playgrounds), make plans to reduce gaps and maximize accessibility of that space. For example, paving pathways, removing the barriers at the entrances, adding accessible seating. Apply for funding or allocate budget to support these improvements.</p>
<p>BE10</p>	<p>Planned and future improvements: Consider which public spaces are due for maintenance, renovation, or replacement. Make plans to incorporate accessibility improvements into those changes. Start with no/low-cost changes being explored like signage and consider what changes can be made during routine maintenance of public spaces (e.g. switching pathway materials from wood chips to quarter down).</p>

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B11	Accessible playground: Seek funding to install an accessible playground within the city.
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#	Recommendations: Procurement
P1	Policies: Update procurement policies to incorporate accessibility considerations where applicable, and to what extent. Consider including accessibility statements into the social procurement section of Request for Proposals.
P2	Guidance: Develop guidelines for procuring items related to accommodation needs, for example ergonomic office furniture, adaptive devices, or assistive software. Develop this in concert with the accommodations policy under the Employment section of these recommendations. Make clear who is involved with the process, how an accommodation request for procurable items is made, approved, and fulfilled, how items are chosen, and the timelines for fulfillment in procuring those items.

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#	Recommendation: Increasing Awareness and Reducing Attitudinal Barriers
AW1	<p>Public education and awareness: Develop and launch a public education campaign on accessibility in the municipality for both residents and the business community, which could include things such as why accessibility is a priority for Port Alberni, how Port Alberni is taking action towards accessibility (e.g. through its Accessibility Plan; the formation of the accessibility advisory committee), and how community members can engage with the municipality on accessibility options they would like to see in the community (i.e. through the feedback mechanisms established in accordance with Accessible BC Act requirements). This can include social media messaging, dedicated webpages to accessibility, columns in community newsletters, and posters. The purpose of this is to raise awareness around accessibility, reduce attitudinal barriers to disability, and give a forum for engagement around accessibility.</p>

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Barrier/ Opportunity	Area	Source (or example)	Comments	Opportunities #
Concerns around accessible sidewalks, accessible parking spaces, and more and improved active transportation were also cited in the public survey.	Built Environment	Active Transportation Plan; Public Survey	Active Transportation Plan says: "Street design standards in the City's servicing bylaw should be updated to provide wider sidewalks to accommodate scooters and ascribe other accessibility features, including lighting and benches."	T7; T1; BE3
Challenges with sidewalk maintenance, including obstacles, defects, and natural plant life.	Built Environment	Active Transportation Plan; Feedback to staff; Public Survey; Accessibility Committee	Active Transportation Plan says: "Adopt a sidewalk maintenance policy. This policy would include standards for inspection, identifying defects and obstacles, and prioritizing repairs. Many other municipalities have implemented sidewalk maintenance policies. As well, the Municipal Insurance Association may be able assist with questions of liability related to sidewalk maintenance."	T7; T1
Community gap in accessible housing.	Delivery of Services	Corporate Strategic Plan; Public Survey; Uptown revitalization strategy	Corporate Strategic Plan says: "Explore alternatives to lead the way in developing strategies for accessible housing options for all community members." Uptown revitalization strategy says: "Update Zoning bylaw with an equity-based approach to ensure affordable housing is both developed and maintained... Create a new zone for affordable and special needs housing; provide density bonuses in the Zoning bylaw for affordable housing"	S7
Emergency response plans do not include instructions on how to assist people with disabilities; or to ensure everyone is aware of the emergency (e.g. Deaf/ HOH)	Built Environment	Evacuation plans x7	The plans don't seem to include anything about supporting visitors at all to exit the building, including in the pool or the Multiplex.	ES1; ES2; ES3; ES4
No accessible playground	Built Environment	Built Environment Round Table Interview; Public Survey; Built environment report https://www.albervalleynews.com/community/port-albervi-parents-lobby-for-new-inclusive-playground-2273269 ; Public Survey	Public feedback suggests there's opportunity for replacing some playground equipment with accessible playground equipment to replace previously vandalized accessible equipment.	BE2; BE5; BE10; B11
Opportunities to improve parks and playgrounds	Built Environment	LTRT Review; Accessibility review (SPARC BC); Public Survey	Public feedback suggests there's opportunity for improving city park/playground pathways by paving them for use for individuals using mobility devices. May be beneficial to prioritize pathways from parking to playgrounds and other high use paths. Ensure planning for clearing and maintenance when budgeting for improvements. A lack of accessible pathways and access to key outdoor recreational areas were cited as barriers by residents.	BE2; BE5; BE10; B11

Reviewing the accessibility of the built environment in high use facilities like the hockey arena and pool would be beneficial.	Built Environment	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews; Public Survey	Comments noted issues with seating, pool deck, restroom/change & shower rooms, equipment, elevator access to seating areas.	BE6
Opportunity for incremental changes if larger budget improvements for accessibility cannot be immediately prioritized	Built Environment	Built Environment Round Table Interview	Could consider smaller updates in facilities, examples: - motion sensor taps in facilities - power door openers - lever door handles - swing clear hinges - leveling door thresholds - adding railings - bringing colour contrast to public spaces - installing hearing loops - reno counter heights - zero depth pool entry (likely needing larger reno plan)	BE1; BE9; BE10
Older buildings with asbestos and aging facility structures	Built Environment	Built Environment Round Table Interview	Prioritize full building condition assessments for older high-use facilities and determine if funding can become available for accessibility as eligible expenses included in parts of larger building system retrofits. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities-Green Municipal fund for energy efficient retrofits could be a good example to explore in this subject area.	BE1; BE2; BE4; BE6; BE10
Public feedback suggests there is an opportunity to improve seating areas in facilities.	Built Environment	Built Environment Round Table Interview; Public Survey; Built environment report	Explore having different seating table heights and setups in facilities with barrier-free paths of travel throughout.	BE7
A lack of accessible and gender inclusive washrooms throughout the municipality were identified as a barriers by residents.	Built Environment	Public Survey		BE1; BE2; BE8
Assessments and plans do not consistently and explicitly consider the unique needs of people with disabilities	Delivery of Services	Community Profile		S6; ES3
City is working on opportunity to pay for more services online (ie. tickets, licensing, etc.)	Delivery of Services	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Ensure new software systems and communication on new systems accounts for accessibility and is robustly tested.	S6; IC3; IC4; P1
City is working on opportunity to provide new GIS (Geographic Information System) to public.	Delivery of Services	Other Service Roundtable Interview	A layer of information on accessibility could be explored to add to this system. The interface itself should also be tested for accessibility.	IC3; IC7
A lack of accessible recreational programs and services for people with disabilities. Lack of accessible spaces, dedicated programming, and staff knowledgeable about accessibility were cited by residents.	Delivery of Services	Public Survey		S6
Staff capacity around adaptations and modifications to programs and spaces were noted to be lacking in accessibility features therefore some adults and kids are turned away.	Employment	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews; Public Survey	This barrier seems to intersectionally have affects in delivery of services, info & comms, and the built environment.	SE6
Noted difficulties in understanding the accessibility needs of new hires.	Employment	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		E1; E2

Noted difficulties and gaps obtaining office furniture and equipment such as sit-to-stand desks and large computer monitors. Accommodation process is also noted as a gap.	Employment	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		E1; E4; P2
Noted difficulty in knowledge capacity on how to create digitally accessible documents and communications and how to properly offer and facilitate requests for alternative formats.	Employment	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		IC1; IC5; S5
Accommodation policy is not always made clear enough to employees or applicants of employment and does not cover areas like recruitment.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview	Comments made during interview indicate that ability to self-report accommodation needs might be unevenly applied between individuals with visible/invisible disabilities.	E1; E3; E4; ES4
Inclusive language and equitable encouragement is not used enough in job postings.	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		E2; E3; E4
Formal training for managers on accommodation or accessibility is not offered	Employment	Employment Roundtable Interview		E2
Parks and Recreation Master Plan in the works that will need public consultation, great opportunity to get feedback on accessibility.	Information and Communications	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews	This opportunity seems to intersectionally have affects in all other areas.	BE5; BE6; BE2
City needs to establish a direct feedback system of communication with public on accessibility matters.	Information and Communications	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews	This barrier seems to intersectionally have affects in all areas.	S4; BE2
Playinpa.ca website is not accessible	Information and Communications	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews	Comment submitted by email by Willa Thorpe Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture and she could not attend staff interview	IC1; IC3
Evidence of recreation programs not having accessible methods to apply.	Information and Communications	Parks & Rec Staff Interviews	HEART program notes only method of applying as in-person by paper application form.	S6
Public facing internet site is not digitally accessible for screen reader users, or users with low-vision. Navigation difficulty has also been noted as not being intuitive.	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview; Public Survey		IC3
Intranet site in regards to timesheets and public tools for processing payments for parks and rec services are not always accessible.	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		IC4
Council meetings have been noted as not being accessible as there is no live streaming captioning for meetings that are streamed as well, it was noted that not all meetings are accessible to online viewers.	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		S1-S3
Online payment bookings have been interacting poorly with adaptive software because of older online architecture	Information and Communications	IT Staff Roundtable Interview		IC4
Accessibility needs could be improved for public communications through Facebook & Twitter for social media, general news releases and statements, newsletters, and Let's Connect page.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC1; IC2; IC5
Direct outreach with seniors and disability support groups should be improved, as well as communications directed to individuals living with disabilities.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC7
Public Events need ASL & Alternative forms of information sharing and events directly hosted by the municipality in their own venues could improve with their accessible setup.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC6

Training and Resources to build accessible communications with the public is needed as the following was identified as gaps by both staff and residents: - Resource checklists for creating accessible comms - Plain language knowhow - Description text for images - Centralize resources could be possible for municipalities for items like a new style guide covering plain language, font, contrast, etc.	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview; Public Survey		IC5
Print media vendors have outdated equipment that produces blurred text	Information and Communications	Comms & Engagement Round Table Interview		P1
The City doesn't have large print versions of documents	Information and Communications	Other Service Roundtable Interview	Could be easily converted. May be a good opportunity to hire a summer student with a disability if there are a large number of documents to be converted.	IC5; IC8
Port Alberni's response to accessibility issues in transportation is very ad hoc based	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview	Prioritized list of accessibility issues is needed so that things can be addressed efficiently however large scale public consultation has not occurred yet. This is hoped to occur in the upcoming transportation master plan process.	T1-T6
Port Alberni is in the early stage of procuring services for their Transportation Master Plan	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview	Roundtable meeting seemed to indicate a current state of "we don't even know what we don't know" understanding on accessibility. However PA is in the early stages of starting a Transportation Master Plan so this would include a large amount of community consultation. They should have a specific focus on making this consultation effort accessible to include as many attendees as possible with lived experience and to include and large list of accessibility focused questions to get fulsome feedback.	T1-T6
Port Alberni staff that provide transportation don't seem to have training in dealing with members of the public living with disabilities	Transportation	Transportation Roundtable Interview; Public Survey	Basic training could be useful for engaging the public on a daily basis in transportation settings.	E2; T3
A lack of safe and accessible intersections were cited as barriers by residents including poor visibility, long distances across crosswalks, unclear signage, and poor lighting.	Transportation	Public Survey		T1-T5
Some residents cited that bus service is infrequent, inaccessible, and that navigating transportation services is confusing.	Transportation	Public Survey		T1-T6