

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Regional District and City work together to create more accessible communities

PORT ALBERNI – The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) and the City of Port Alberni are pleased to announce they are collaborating to develop a plan to improve accessibility in the Alberni-Clayoquot Region.

Building an inclusive, accessible community that addresses the diverse needs that people with disabilities face is essential. The two organizations will explore what barriers and challenges exist in the Region and make meaningful changes that will help them meet the requirements of the *Accessible BC Act*.

“Communities that celebrate inclusion and diversity provide a kinder, richer social environment for everyone,” says ACRD Director Vaida Siga. “Ensuring those with diverse needs have accessibility to community resources will support physical, social, mental, and economic well-being of the whole community. I look forward to working collaboratively toward this objective.”

By collaborating on the creation of an Accessibility Plan and the formation of an Accessibility Committee, the City of Port Alberni and the ACRD will meet their goal of identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to individuals in or interacting with our organizations. Partnering on this project allows for timely way to better serve the residents in the Alberni-Clayoquot Region. Working together will also decrease the staff time, creating a more cost-efficient plan for both organizations.

“What a disability looks like varies – some are obvious, some are not. Looking around our community there is such a diverse range of people with disabilities. Just one limitation can impact participation and movement, as we have seen,” explains Cindy Solda, Port Alberni city councillor. “When I look around our community, I see many examples of people facing barriers to their movement within the community. Working and collaborating on an Accessibility Plan can ensure we create inclusive public spaces. We need to do better than we are now – being inclusive benefits all of us.”

The Accessibility Plan will be developed with the support and input of the Accessibility Committee and will consider principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design. More information on the Committee is available in the [Terms of Reference](#).

The ACRD has issued an expression of interest for people who want to volunteer to join the committee and be part of this new initiative. The committee will consist of five members at large, with the majority self-identifying as having a disability or someone who supports a person with disabilities, one person who identifies as Indigenous, and one member of City Council and one ACRD Director. The EOI is available [HERE](#) and applications are being accepted until January 10, 2024.



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT
REGIONAL DISTRICT



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PORT ALBERNI

You can stay up to date on accessibility in our community by visiting the [website](#).

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