



**THE ACCESSIBLE / INCLUSIVE
CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT**

DRAFT REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I	FOREWORD BY PATRICE PRATT	2
II	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
III	BACKGROUND	6
IV	THE CATALYST OF THE OLYMPICS	8
V	DEFINING ACCESSIBILITY AND CITIZENSHIP	9
VI	REACHING OUT: THE CONSULTATION PROCESS	11
VII	ASSESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY LANDSCAPE	13
VIII	AVOIDING THE TRAP OF DUPLICATION	15
IX	OBSERVATIONS	17
X	RECOMMENDATIONS	23
XI	CONCLUSION	26
XII	APPENDIX 1	27
XIII	APPENDIX 2	28
XIV	APPENDIX 3	30
XV	APPENDIX 4	33
XVI	REFERENCES	45



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

FOREWORD BY PATRICE PRATT

The Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project is a grass-roots, community-based initiative that is poised to change the face of British Columbia, and being a part of it has been a fascinating experience. My efforts to positively impact the lives of people with disabilities in this province have been a constant part of my life for some time, however, and my role as project coordinator over the past six months is simply the culmination of over twenty-five years of personal passion.

My journey with disability issues began on December 14, 1978 when my daughter, Jordana, was born. During those early years, she cried for six hours every night, could not maintain a healthy weight, and was consistently misinterpreted by doctors who would write "*failure to thrive*" on her charts.

I didn't know what was "wrong" with Jordana until many years later when she was diagnosed with Williams Syndrome, a rare disorder (1 in every 20,000 births) that results in developmental delays and an array of serious medical and development concerns.

Knowledge was the key, and with it came my refusal to sit back helplessly, committing instead to improving the lives of Jordana and all people with disabilities. I was one of the founders of the *Canadian Association for Williams Syndrome*, and organized an international conference on the condition at UBC in 1997. Both as a parent and an activist, I have learned first hand the systemic difficulties that are encountered by people with disabilities, and take great pride in the fact that Jordana was the first 'Williams kid' to ever graduate from a Canadian high school.

Judith Snow, a prominent Canadian disability activist and founder of the *International Association for Inclusive Citizenship*, has said:

"All individuals, regardless of their differences, must be regarded as an unusual gift, not a burden, to the broader social structure. People must see that differences do not have to be fixed or cured. Instead, each individual's gifts must be discovered, accepted and shaped."¹

Whether we are born with a disability, as with Jordana and Vancouver City Councillor Tim Louis, acquire a disability later in life, as in the cases of Vancouver City Councillor Sam Sullivan and former Premier of British Columbia Mike Harcourt, or are simply encountering the realities of old age, we are all only temporarily able-bodied. As the 1991 BC Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs so aptly pointed out:



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

“Disability is somewhat of an equal opportunity situation. At any given time in our life any one of us could join this elite group.”²

Through my consultations with business interests, the academic community and disability organizations over the last six months, I have truly begun to understand that there is a tangible need for the contributions of people with disabilities. People with disabilities are a part of every community in Canada, and it is time to start recognizing the untapped possibilities and opportunities that their involvement could represent. With the 2010 Winter Olympic Games fast approaching, British Columbia has a spectacular platform to broadly expand its goals of accessibility and inclusion by fulfilling a commitment to hold the most sustainable games in history.

I am excited for what the future holds, and optimistic that the Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project will make British Columbia the model of accessibility, equality and inclusion for the rest of the world.

Patrice Pratt
Project Coordinator
Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project (AICCP) was begun as a result of a Vancouver City Council motion which aspired to create greater opportunities for people with disabilities in British Columbia. Much of the thrust behind the motion was grounded in taking advantage of the power of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games as a catalyst for change.

After receiving overwhelming support from municipalities across British Columbia, a project coordinator was hired to develop a strategic plan and produce a motivational rating instrument for municipalities to assess their overall accessibility.

In consideration of both the sustainability commitments made in the *Vancouver 2010 Bid Book*, as well as the creation of the *Inclusive Intent Statement* by the Vancouver Olympic Committee for the Olympic Games (VOCOG), the 2010 Winter Olympic Games is a galvanizing force which is extremely complementary to the objectives of the AICCP.

Accessibility and Citizenship are the two pillars in which the AICCP derives its purpose from. Understanding both the factors that contribute to creating an accessible community as well as the rights and responsibilities associated with being an active citizen are fundamental to any efforts directed towards improving the lives of people with disabilities.

The major thrust of the first phase of the AICCP was the consultation component, which occupied seventy-five per cent of the time invested by the project coordinator. A set of guidelines was developed in conjunction with the AICCP advisory committee to manage the initial scepticism of the disability community towards a new initiative such as the AICCP.

While Vancouver and British Columbia have much to be proud of in terms of accessibility accomplishments, there is still much work to be done before the province can be considered the most accessible and inclusive jurisdiction in the world. Still, the progress that has been achieved by municipalities across British Columbia provides a strong incentive to continue what has been begun in the first phase of the AICCP.

Many of the concepts that the AICCP is advocating have long histories with a multitude of already existing disability organizations. Thus, the first phase of the AICCP, including this report's observations and recommendations, has been shaped by one principle consideration: how can the AICCP contribute something new to the disability landscape?



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

In consultation with the advisory committee, the project coordinator has prepared five key observations in summary of the work that has been completed:

- 1) There is no standardized means of gauging how British Columbia municipalities are doing in achieving their accessibility and inclusion objectives.
- 2) Business considerations are a key motivator in building accessible and inclusive communities.
- 3) The AICCP can make the biggest impact by working directly with communities.
- 4) The AICCP is well-positioned to take full advantage of the global attention that will be directed towards British Columbia in the coming years.
- 5) Communications, collaboration and advocacy within the disability community tend to be disjointed by the lack of a unifying force.

Based on these five observations, the project coordinator with counsel from the advisory committee is forwarding five recommendations to be considered for action:

- 1) Within the first 6 months of 2005, the AICCP should create and distribute a community motivational rating instrument.
- 2) Within 6 months of the submission of this report, the AICCP should commission a business case for accessibility and inclusion.
- 3) Within 1 year of the distribution of the rating instrument, the AICCP should contact, coordinate and provide general assistance to every municipality in the province.
- 4) The AICCP should use the 2006 World Urban Forum to highlight British Columbia's progress in building accessible and inclusive communities.
- 5) Within the first 3 months of 2005, the AICCP should be extended to execute on the abovementioned recommendations.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

BACKGROUND

The AICCP was conceived through the introduction of a motion to Vancouver City Council by councillors Sam Sullivan and Tim Louis (refer to Appendix 1).

The motion was premised on two fundamental objectives:

- 1) To foster greater opportunities within the City of Vancouver and across British Columbia for people with disabilities.
- 2) To harness the 2010 Winter Olympic Games as a catalyst for the creation of such opportunities.

While there is a healthy and diverse disability infrastructure that already exists in the province, the motion attempted to create a new lens in which to consider the broader implications of disability. New paradigms of opportunity and community have been created in British Columbia as a result of the Olympic Games being awarded to Vancouver, a fact that became abundantly clear after Councillors Louis and Sullivan engaged the public through a series of community meetings designed to expand upon their vision.

Central to their efforts was trying to find the right mix of services, supports and outcomes that would assist people with disabilities in achieving independence, productivity, integration, inclusion, and self-determination. As a result of these consultations, two streams of discourse emerged as identified priorities:

- 1) **Accessibility Agenda** – Accessibility objectives continue to expand as recognition of the burgeoning scope of disability continues to evolve (refer to Appendix 2). Correspondingly, the accessibility component was envisaged as encompassing strategies and solutions that would counteract the physical, attitudinal, and institutional barriers encountered by people with disabilities.
- 2) **Citizenship Agenda** – People with disabilities have both the capability and responsibility to exercise their citizenship. This concept of what it means to be a citizen relies on emphasizing belonging, rights, responsibilities, relationships and contributions over disability and handicap.

Within these broad categorizations, five sets of specific criteria were defined as essential components in the development of a plan of action:

- 1) Full accessibility and a barrier free environment
- 2) Financial security



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

- 3) The opportunity to live and be supported in one's own home
- 4) Funding that would enable people to make their own choices about daily living
- 5) Health and safety

The content that was derived from these public meetings provided enough impetus to proceed forward, and propelled Vancouver City Council to unanimously pass the original motion on October 14, 2003. The thrust of the resolutions contained within the motion were clearly directed towards British Columbia as a whole, and thus in partnership with the provincial government, the motion was subsequently distributed to every municipal council in the province.

The AICCP was met with extremely positive responses from municipal representatives, and has to this point been officially endorsed by over forty municipalities, with many others still expected to be formally involved. The widespread enthusiasm also generated significant interest from the federal government, and under the auspices of the tripartite urban development Vancouver Agreement, all three levels of government jointly contributed \$75,000 in seed funding support to hire a project coordinator. The job description called for both the development of a strategic plan and the creation of a motivational rating instrument for municipalities to assess their overall accessibility.

This report, as well as a conference to develop the motivational rating instrument for communities (slated to take place January 24-25, 2005, and discussed later in this report), completes the first phase of the AICCP.



THE CATALYST OF THE OLYMPICS

In recognition of the prominent role that the themes of “inclusion” and “citizenship” play in the *Vancouver 2010 Bid Book*, (the document that was crucial to securing Vancouver as an Olympic host), the AICCP is appropriate and timely.

The Vancouver 2010 bid commits the Vancouver Olympic Committee for the Olympic Games (VOCOG) to a “Sustainability Management System,” which “embrace[s] the economic and social components of sustainability in order to support balanced decision making, a long-term view, inclusiveness, equity and healthy communities.”³ Central to this pledge is the *Inclusive Intent Statement* produced by the VOCOG, which establishes five core values in which to proceed with the organization of the games: lasting community legacies, fiscal responsibility, sustainability, open communication, and inclusive representation.⁴

The bid book also commits the VOCOG to “draft key performance indicators and targets associated with each of the sustainability policy objectives.”⁵ This process is to be monitored closely, with all progress on the achievement of specific goals communicated publicly, and key stakeholders continuously consulted to improve and refine procedures.

Along the lines of these commitments and measures for accountability, the AICCP has been planned and carried out within a similar framework. The strategic plan was commissioned to ensure that people with disabilities are able to exercise full citizenship through active contributions. The project’s advisory committee has been balanced by a diverse mix of representatives from the disability community, the business community and government sectors. Finally, the development of the motivational rating instrument will ensure that performance across the province will be rated with consistency.

As a disclaimer, it is important to emphasize that the Olympics represent a galvanizing force for this project rather than the basis under which it is constrained or assessed. That is, the opportunities attached to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games has bestowed Vancouver, British Columbia and perhaps Canada as a whole with the spirit, political will and resources that are not only complementary to undertaking a project of this magnitude, but more importantly, functional in seeing various initiatives through to completion. Nonetheless, the impetus, execution and progress of the AICCP are entirely independent and distinct from the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.



DEFINING ACCESSIBILITY AND CITIZENSHIP

What defines an accessible community? What are the characteristics of full citizenship? Answering these two questions is essential to laying a foundation for the AICCP. Thus, in acknowledgement of work that has already been well researched and codified, this report chooses to defer to the Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia (SPARC BC) and the organization Philia for their respective expertise on the subject matter.

SPARC BC (<http://www.sparc.bc.ca>) is a voluntary association which conducts research and planning towards the well-being of British Columbia's communities, working in partnership with these communities to build a just and healthy society for all.

SPARC BC further breaks down this concept in its 1996 report, *Making Space for Everyone – A guide to creating accessible communities*, which identifies four principles – independence, comfort, self-esteem, and security – that any successful community must incorporate into their accessibility plan.⁶

As understanding of disability has expanded, so too has the diversity of needs that a fully accessible community must meet. As SPARC BC notes, “an accessible community is an inclusive community,”⁷ meaning that all community members must be considered equally in the planning of public and private facilities.

Accessibility issues must be considered as a spectrum rather than as individual entities, because collectively they shape a community's “accessibility quotient,”⁸ which has a direct impact on the disability criteria ascertained through Councillors Louis' and Sullivan's public consultations – barrier free environments, financial security, housing options, healthy lifestyles and adequate support services.

Philia (<http://philia.ca>) is a national dialogue on citizenship through which communities are challenged “to welcome and encourage the contributions of people who have traditionally been marginalized.”⁹

Philia regards the role of citizen as one of the most important societal roles, and defines citizenship to consist of three key components: rights, responsibilities and access.

- 1) Rights of belonging, of access to justice and due process, of mutual recognition and approval of our distinctiveness, uniqueness and differences both as individuals and groups.



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

- 2) Responsibilities to respect and care for each other; to commit to the well being of the community, to contribute to the health and vitality of our communities, to engage in creating a vital society.
- 3) Access to the forums, institutions, associations and public spaces where citizens meet, discuss, share, work, contribute, play and socialize.¹⁰

This is a very important interpretation of citizenship, because it places equal weight on the give and take of what being a citizen is all about. Just as people deserve to be welcomed and included, they also have an inherent societal duty to contribute and share their gifts with their fellow citizens.

People with disabilities do not necessarily need to be treated specially, but must have barriers removed and the corresponding supports available in order to exercise the same rights and freedoms as other citizens and be able to contribute to society.



REACHING OUT: THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The lion's share of this project was devoted to seeking out meaningful and ongoing input from representatives of the broad disability community and other key stakeholders throughout the province. Towards this end, the AICCP achieved some of its most important progress to date.

The extension of this project to the expansive disability community, business interests, the tourism industry and the non-profit sector was a very delicate matter that had to be handled with caution and grace.

Accordingly, a set of guiding principles was carefully prepared with the advisory committee to establish a suitable protocol for engagement:

- 1) Project Introduction** – As a brand new initiative integrating into the disability landscape, explanation of inception and purpose had to be offered as widely as possible. First impressions, particularly within the scope of this project, are indelible, and initial contact had to demonstrate the right mix of support and deference.
- 2) Information Aggregation** – An abundance of information has already been produced by both the disability community and various organizations dealing with specific issues involving people with disabilities. Accessing this material was important to acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape, and subsequently determining an appropriate purpose and function for the AICCP.
- 3) Good Will & Co-operation** – Integral to the success of this endeavour was opening up communication lines by conveying the kind of information and involvement being sought, finding out how the strategic plan could best reflect the obstacles and challenges currently being encountered, and most importantly, imparting the message that the purpose of dialogue was not to reinvent the wheel or encroach on ongoing efforts, but rather to provide a new outlet of support.
- 4) Advice & Consultation** – There is no substitute for the familiarity gained through experience, and so accessing strategies on how to proceed was a very important component of the outreach efforts. Not only does this approach honour the expertise of the various organizations already in place, but also provides invaluable contacts, ideas and guidance to further



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

develop a workable process.

- 5) Political Unity** – Ultimately, engagement with the various groups and organizations was designed to build paths towards long lasting partnerships and alliances. Because of the widely applicable nature of this project, the stated objectives most often fit directly or indirectly within the mandate of every entity that was consulted, and thus it was logical to take advantage of any and all common ground to demonstrate the strength of shared intent.

Early meetings with this project's advisory committee as well as the Advisory Committee on Disabilities (City of) Vancouver (ACDIV) determined a list of organizations that were essential to connect with since it was necessary to incorporate all categories of disability and key external interests into the mix. The summer months proved useful in covering a substantial amount of ground, as normally busy agendas were much more relaxed and practical. By late fall, 600 business cards had been distributed through an array of meetings, conferences, events, presentations and speaking engagements (refer to Appendix 3 for the complete list of the relationships that have been established thus far).

Reaction to this project was mixed at first. People with disabilities and organizations that advocate and provide services in the field have been working tirelessly for many years, facing growing funding challenges and the pressures of increasing need. The disability community has witnessed enough new organizations/initiatives, changes in government and unfulfilled promises to feel a healthy skepticism towards 'the new kid on the block' and a frustration with new projects or programs offering cooperation and assistance. These individuals and organizations do not want to be patronized by another action plan promising answers and solutions, nor do they want to feel threatened that their limited resources might be challenged by the emergence of yet another competing cog in the disability infrastructure.

The project coordinator and the advisory committee came to appreciate this apprehension early on, and used the above-listed guidelines to overcome it by generating excitement and support for the project. More important, however, was the evolution of a fundamental understanding that the key to acceptance, continuance, and ultimately, success will rest on how this project is differentiated from the existing landscape.



ASSESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY LANDSCAPE

Both Vancouver and British Columbia as a whole have many specific accessibility accomplishments to be proud of. This bodes well for this project, which hopes to take the next step towards establishing the province as the most accessible jurisdiction in the world.

Whether referring to accessible transportation, progressive building codes, accessible leisure, recreational opportunities or innovative housing, Vancouver is “the most accessible city in the world,” according to *We’re Accessible*, a global newsletter for travelers with disabilities.¹¹

The Vancouver International Airport (YVR) is widely considered as one of the most barrier-free airports in the world, and far exceeds the national and provincial building code standards for people with hearing, visual or mobility impairments. A list of YVR’s accessible terminal features include:

- ticket and service counters with amplified handsets
- low mouthed flight information monitors designed for easier view with high-contrast typeface
- visual paging monitors and public address systems displayed in written form
- information kiosks equipped with closed-captioned decoders
- tactile guidance maps of the terminal building
- accessible public telephones and services for the deaf
- accessible washrooms, facilities for services dogs are to be built in the near future¹²

In 1990, Vancouver became the first city in Canada to provide scheduled bus service to people with disabilities. Nearly seventy-five per cent of all Lower Mainland buses are accessible, with plans to have all routes covered by 2007.¹³ All rapid transit SkyTrain stations, except Granville Street, are also accessible. In addition, custom door-to-door transportation is available through the HandyDART service, ferries between Vancouver and Victoria are fully accessible, and there are more wheelchair-accessible taxis than any other city in Canada. There are more than 14,000 sidewalk wheelchair ramps in downtown Vancouver, and thus motorized wheelchairs are a common sight.¹⁴

Most major attractions in Vancouver and the surrounding region are accessible. This includes a long list of options that allow people with disabilities to take



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

advantage of the city's natural beauty, including the seawall and wheelchair accessible trolley rides in gorgeous Stanley Park, gondola rides up Grouse Mountain, and recreational opportunities like disabled skiing and horseback riding offered through the BC Sport and Fitness Council for the Disabled.

Communities across British Columbia are also involved in organized efforts to offer greater accessibility to people with disabilities. As part of the Community Accessibility Contacts Initiative (CACI), which is a SPARC BC sponsored project, municipalities around the province are collectively involved in addressing accessibility challenges through communication, information sharing and partnerships with each other.

SPARC BC also produces the *Access Links* booklet annually, which serves as a "living reference tool for community leaders looking for ways to effectively address accessibility issues."¹⁵ The publication contains profiles of every municipality in the province which provide descriptions, issues, and contacts detailing the efforts taking place to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in each respective community (refer to Appendix 4 to view these summarized profiles).

By no means do these accomplishments suggest that Vancouver and British Columbia have achieved full accessibility, as the motivation behind this project clearly indicates. Guide dogs and assistance dogs are still frequently barred from the confines of taxis. The provision of community living services is still disjointed and inadequate when measured against population share. Employment opportunities are still largely restricted for people with disabilities. Availability of disabled parking spaces is still limited in scope and widely abused by able-bodied drivers.

The fact that so many of British Columbia's municipalities are actively involved in the expansion of local accessibility, however, provides strong impetus to continue what has been begun in the first phase of the AICCP.



AVOIDING THE TRAP OF DUPLICATION

The Vancouver Agreement's initial "2010 Vision for People with Disabilities" project description provided a cursory direction of what was expected from the AICCP, both in terms of process and deliverables. In addition to the already referenced strategic plan and motivational rating instrument, there was a call for the:

“...implementation of a vision of a community where all people with all types of disabilities can take their place as citizens in their communities, where all people with disabilities can make contributions to their communities as they are able; and where these contributions are welcomed and recognized.”¹⁶

The all-encompassing nature of this objective, however, does not fully acknowledge the integration and progress that has been achieved by the diverse segments of the disability community. With an extensive and entrenched support network for people with disabilities in place, countless organizations are already advocating for these priorities.

Philia, for example, promotes community-based dialogue to encourage the full citizenship and participation of people with disabilities and the optimization of “the unique and underutilized contributions of Canadians with disabilities.”¹⁷

The BC Coalition of People with Disabilities (<http://www.bccpd.bc.ca>), for its part, is set up “to facilitate the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society and to promote independence.”¹⁸

The BC Association for Community Living (<http://www.bcacl.org>) not only encourages interaction between people with disabilities and the community as a whole, but also “support[s] activities dedicated to building inclusive communities that value the diverse abilities of all people.”¹⁹

These examples represent only a tiny slice of the diverse infrastructure that is currently available to people with disabilities. As a direct result of the AICCP's consultation phase, the expansiveness of the disability landscape became abundantly clear.

It was never the aim of the founding Vancouver City Council motion, nor the function of this first phase of the vision, to impinge on the efforts and activities best carried out by the experts already engaged on the ground.

People with disabilities have established relationships with these organizations, whose declared mandates have done an admirable job of encompassing and



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

representing their specific constituencies. Therefore the message of this project had to be one that was welcomed by a wide range people with varying priorities and points of view.

Consequently, in examining the original intent behind the 2010 Vision for People with Disabilities, there was really only one question that steered the construction of this strategic plan:

What is the 2010 Vision for People with Disabilities going to add to the lives of people with disabilities?



OBSERVATIONS

With such an established assemblage of organizations representing such a broad composite of resources, services and overall support, the AICCP had to look for ways it could contribute something new to the equation.

The consultation process provided a comprehensive understanding of the systemic deficiencies that exist as impediments to reaching full accessibility and inclusion. From the many physical barriers that limit mobility, to societal stigmas caused by a lack of information, to the difficulties in accessing sufficient health care services due to bureaucratic red tape, there are organizations already in existence that are well informed and fighting to overcome these obstacles.

If the word “vision” is used to define the work being undertaken by this project, there is an associated responsibility to make examinations and forward suggestions that are more macro in scope.

Within this understanding, the project coordinator, with counsel from the advisory committee, has designated five observations as the basis from which to move forward:

1) **There is no standardized means of gauging how British Columbia municipalities are doing in achieving their accessibility and inclusion objectives.**

As documented in Appendix 4, there are ongoing efforts within municipalities across the province that are working towards providing full accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities. SPARC BC’s compiled research has identified four categories by which to categorize the surveyed communities:

- 1) Municipalities with an advisory committee
- 2) Municipalities with a formalized relationship with a community group
- 3) Municipalities without an advisory committee
- 4) Other municipalities

While this survey is useful in measuring annual progress in each respective community, it is extremely difficult to compare and contrast individual successes and challenges due to a lack of standardized criteria. While one community might have tackled the problems of physical impediments like a lack of curb cuts, ramps or available parking spaces, other communities might have focused on public outreach to encourage greater awareness and support for disability issues.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

Municipalities make changes at different speeds and in different directions based on a number of factors, including budget, individual community priorities, previous progress and population composition. Now, while this approach is logical in terms of finding solutions that fit appropriately to each respective community, it is one that also renders any progress for British Columbia as a whole difficult to manage.

The only way for the province's municipalities to collectively move forward with such ambitious objectives is through the encouragement of continuity. Whether large or small, every community should be able to seamlessly assess their levels of accessibility and inclusion through a common set of standards and principles.

2) The business case for building accessible and inclusive communities is a powerful motivator.

The accommodation of disability is too often framed as an act that should be driven by an adherence to equality, fundamental rights, and moral obligation. While this type of reasoning might truly reflect a genuine compassion that exists towards people with disabilities, there are powerful arguments that can be used to advance accessibility and inclusion proposals from a business perspective, that being the bottom line.

The marketplace dictates that gaining a competitive advantage is almost always the most expedient catalyst for change, and the emerging reality of disability is one of great opportunity on many different levels.

In November, 2001, the Government of Ontario commissioned a report for its Paths to Equal Opportunity initiative entitled *The Business Case for Accessibility: How Accessibility-Awareness Strengthens Your Company's Bottom Line*. Three conclusions were forwarded as the fundamental linkages between accessibility and competitiveness:

- Persons with disabilities give business a new competitive edge
- Attracting people with disabilities as employees and customers is a win/win strategy
- The business case for accessibility leads to the opportunity to create a business plan for accessibility, which allows companies to capitalize on the productivity and consumer spending power of this segment of the market.²⁰

According to the report, people with disabilities are responsible for an astonishing \$25 billion in annual consumer buying power in Canada alone, and subsequently



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

have an influence on a huge secondary market of friends and family (estimated to be between 12-15 million others).²¹

People with disabilities also represent an unheralded, yet largely productive workforce that can yield solutions for the substantial labour shortages expected in British Columbia in the coming decades. According to the *2010 Winter Games Labour Supply and Gap Analysis* report, as a result of an aging population, participation within the BC labour force is estimated to drop from 72.8% in 2001 to 67.3% in 2015.²²

This statistic becomes even more daunting when contrasted with the fact that the Winter Games is estimated to generate an 8.4% increase in labour demand, while major capital projects such as the RAV line and the expansion of the Sea-to-Sky highway to Whistler are expected to increase labour demand by nearly 6%.²³ In 2001, there were 300,000 working age persons with disabilities in British Columbia, and only 44% of these people were actually employed.²⁴ The Government of British Columbia has recognized these statistics and taken a positive step forward with the *WorkAble Solutions* initiative (<http://www.workable-solutionsbc.ca>), which provides a unique employment resource for persons with a disability, employers, and Human Resource professionals in British Columbia.

There also seems to be a disconnect between the myths surrounding the requirements of accommodating employees with disabilities and the immense impact those employees can have on corporate workforces. Major corporations like Dupont have had great success in hiring persons with disabilities, decisions which have positively impacted the available pool of employees, increased staff retention rates, and decreased absenteeism. Thirty years of internal surveys and conducted by Dupont demonstrated that employees with disabilities did their jobs well, had excellent attendance records, were diligent in observing safety standards, and helped to maintain the firm's overall competitive position.²⁵

Based on the dramatic demographic trends that Canada is poised to experience (the growth of the seniors' population will account for close to half of the growth of the overall Canadian population in the next four decades²⁶), the tourism industry is also keenly aware of the attractive market potential that people with disabilities represent. The AICCP has been in close contact with Tourism Vancouver throughout the development of the strategic plan, and has received enthusiastic support for accessibility initiatives that would help Vancouver and British Columbia increase their appeal to the disability travel market.

There is still much to learn about how British Columbia can take full advantage of the economic impact that people with disabilities can have on the province.



3) The AICCP can best fulfill the intent of the original Vancouver City Council motion by working directly with communities across British Columbia.

In navigating through the disability landscape over the past six months, the AICCP has been guided and shaped by understanding the roles that it should not or cannot fulfill just as much as it has by discovering the functions it is best suited to carry out.

The AICCP will never have the capability to serve as a funding mechanism for activities, programs or campaigns related to disability. The AICCP cannot be designed as an entity with a designated membership, as it must be constituted as an entity relevant and applicable to as many people, groups and sectors as possible. The AICCP will not be focused on contributing to research and discourse relating to disability, areas that have the expertise of many organizations already entrenched in a wide range of disciplines.

As mentioned earlier, the motion to launch the AICCP received widespread support from municipalities across the province after receiving unanimous approval from Vancouver City Council. Accordingly, any future manifestation of the AICCP should largely be premised on the first resolution of this motion, which states:

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Vancouver City Council send a letter to the Premier of British Columbia asking that the Government of British Columbia endorse the effort to create, in partnership with other municipalities in British Columbia, a 2010 Vision, and to take a lead role in its development;”²⁷

An organization like SPARC BC has been interacting with communities across British Columbia for over thirty-five years, and the AICCP can significantly add to these efforts in three specific ways:

- 1) Creating a system of consistency for British Columbia communities and their goals of accessibility and inclusion
- 2) Assisting in accessing resources directly or indirectly related to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games into these communities in order to achieve these goals
- 3) Establishing timelines and targets, and working with communities to meet and exceed them

By following these guidelines, the AICCP can focus its efforts and activities as closely as possible to the original intent of the Vancouver City Council motion.



4) The eyes of the world will be on Vancouver and British Columbia over the next five years, and the AICCP is well-positioned to take advantage of the attention.

Much of the impetus behind the Vancouver City Council motion is directly related to the kind of British Columbia that is desired as a result of hosting the Olympics. More specifically, the motion references the fact that the province wishes to be globally recognized as inclusive to all inhabitants:

“AND WHEREAS, by the year 2010, British Columbians want the world to appreciate British Columbia as a jurisdiction where the contributions of all citizens are enabled and welcomed”²⁸

The reasoning behind this desire for recognition is multi-purposed. Ensuring that the eyes of the world are focused on the progress the AICCP achieves is a powerful force in motivating action among elected officials and the business community. Being internationally renowned for fostering an accessible and inclusive society will further cement British Columbia’s position as a desirable destination for travellers with disabilities. Most prominently, however, the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee has a long list of commitments and legacies that have been pledged around the promise of the staging the most sustainable and inclusive Olympics in history, and the involvement of people with disabilities is paramount to living up to these commitments.

The 2010 Winter Olympics is only one of many international events scheduled to be hosted by British Columbia over the coming years, and the most exciting and relevant to the AICCP is the World Urban Forum, which is slated to be held in Vancouver in 2006.

The Second Session of the World Urban Forum focused on the theme “*Cities: Crossroads of Cultures, Inclusiveness and Integration?*” this past September in Barcelona, Spain. The 2006 edition of the World Urban Forum will mark the 30th anniversary of the first Habitat conference (which led to the creation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the organization that administers the forum, and will “showcase a range of different challenges and meaningful solutions while recognizing the diversity of our situations.”²⁹

This framework is perfectly suited for involvement by the AICCP, and the forum is an immense opportunity to not only communicate the project’s mandate and work to thousands of delegates representing national governments, local authorities and non-governmental organizations, but more importantly, to offer a made-in-BC take on what it means to live in an integrated and inclusive society.



5) As wide as the disability infrastructure spans, there is no unifying force, and as a result, communication, collaboration and advocacy tend to be disjointed.

As already demonstrated throughout this report, the disability landscape is vast and offers a great deal of specialization and expertise on a wide range of subject matter. There are groups that concern themselves with support for specific conditions, groups that work directly with various levels of government, and still others that try to create more sustainable roles in society for people with disabilities. As a result of this extensive network, however, few organized mechanisms have been put in place to inspire coordination in and amongst the disability community.

Approximately seventy-five per cent of the time invested into this project was allocated to seeking out the various entities, establishing working relationships with them, and extracting pertinent information. This process proved to be an effective exercise towards understanding the maze that can be encountered when people with disabilities try to access already existing support networks.

Without disrupting the niches that disability organizations have established for themselves, better coordination in such areas as awareness and exposure, fund raising, public policy advocacy or the leveraging of resources would benefit from a centralized project that encompasses a targeted approach to tackling such issues in communities across British Columbia. The AICCP is based on the assumption that all sectors of society are interested in making our communities more accessible and inclusive by utilizing all available resources.

The City of Vancouver motion has now been officially adopted by over 40 municipalities across British Columbia, and expectations have been raised through the consultation efforts of this project. Both from a logistical standpoint, and as a rallying cry to indicate that the province is really serious about its accessibility and inclusion agenda, the concept of creating a permanent, unifying presence would have a major impact on the disability community as a whole.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the abovementioned observations, the project coordinator, again with counsel from the advisory committee, is forwarding the following five recommendations for consideration.

1) Within the first 6 months of 2005, a community motivational rating instrument and associated strategy should be developed and subsequently distributed to every municipality in the province.

As part of this first phase of the AICCP, an Accessible/Inclusive Community Conference has been scheduled for January 24-25, 2005. Led by Sue Todd of Solstice Sustainability Works Inc. and Roger Jones of World Accessibility Marketplace Inc., the gathered stakeholders will develop a motivational rating instrument that communities can employ towards achieving their accessibility and inclusion objectives. Councillor Sam Sullivan, Councillor Tim Louis, and former Premier Mike Harcourt will play key roles in engaging the more than forty participants representing disability organizations, municipalities, the business community and government who are slated to attend.

Ideally, the rating instrument will serve to:

- Celebrate community achievement
- Inspire others
- Motivate ongoing improvement
- Be easy to understand and apply
- Stimulate community self-evaluation
- Reflect existing research and best practices
- Honour the contributions of people with disabilities
- Engage all sectors of a community
- Nurture relationships between citizens with disabilities and the rest of the community
- Promote awareness of the mutual benefits of accessible and inclusive communities

Upon completion of the conference, the rating instrument will be developed and finalized, and subsequently distributed to every municipality in the province.

2) Within 6 months of the submission of this report, a BC-specific business case for accessibility and inclusion should be commissioned.

While this report has relayed the huge economic potential of people with disabilities, there is limited qualitative and quantitative data available on the exact areas, applications and effects of these opportunities within British Columbia.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

In view of the economic windfall expected in the region due to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, and the associated labour shortages also forecast for so many sectors of the economy, a business case for accessibility and inclusion is a logical next step as part of the AICCP. In fact, this idea has generated such enthusiastic responses from the project coordinator's consultations that such an endeavour is expected to be attractive to several potential partners.

The business case would build a stronger understanding of the largely untapped resources represented by people with disabilities, and thus serve as a powerful tool in advancing the priorities and other areas of work undertaken by the AICCP.

3) **In the one year following the distribution of the rating instrument, contact, coordination and general assistance should be offered to every British Columbia municipality to encourage its integration and implementation into the fabric of community planning across the province.**

With the amount of time, effort and resources being invested into the development of a community motivational rating instrument, it is essential that the AICCP continue to be involved in ensuring that this tool is put to proper use.

With the development of such an instrument comes the responsibility of providing the appropriate support for those wanting to adopt it. Whether that role encompasses education, assistance, strategic advice, or even additional resources, the contact that has been established with municipalities in the first phase of the AICCP must be maintained and cultivated.

The project coordinator feels that one year is an ample amount of time to properly introduce the rating instrument, plan around its implementation, and provide preliminary assessments of what is and isn't working within communities.

Another proposal that should be considered following the completion of one year of consultations is an annual accessibility summit that would gather disability organizations, government agencies, policy experts, business leaders, community activists and people with disabilities to disseminate information and education about each other, exchange ideas, and jointly coordinate towards achieving the most accessible communities possible. Such a summit could see the creation of an annual award in which municipalities from across the province compete to showcase how their citizens with disabilities are participating and contributing to community life.



4) **The AICCP should use the 2006 World Urban Forum to showcase and highlight exemplary examples of accessibility and inclusion from across British Columbia, with a particular focus on the development and implementation of the rating instrument.**

The 2006 World Urban Forum is the ideal medium to promote AICCP to the rest of the globe. By the time of the forum, the AICCP and rating instrument will be well entrenched in communities across the province, and the progression from conceptualization to execution will be an example of British Columbia's preparation towards hosting the Olympics.

The possibilities for how to properly engage delegates and representatives are endless, from presentations and displays to tours, performances and resource packages. Yet regardless of the manifestation of the AICCP's participation in the 2006 World Urban Forum, a presence is necessary to share British Columbia's groundbreaking efforts with the world.

5) **Within the first 3 months of 2005, the AICCP should be extended with the purpose of executing on the abovementioned recommendations.**

For the recommendations contained in this report to have any chance of succeeding, there must be a stand-alone organizational entity devoted to seeing them through to fruition. In consideration of the magnitude of work involved with establishing the beginnings of the AICCP in this first phase, it is the opinion of the project coordinator that this project cannot progress without dedicated resources, particularly when it comes to staffing.

In addition to moving forward on the recommendations presented in this report, the creation of such a unit would be predicated on these fundamental principles:

- Promoting the vision of an accessible and inclusive province to all events and activities leading up to 2006 World Urban Forum, the 2010 Winter Olympics Games and beyond
- Advising the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee to ensure that Vancouver stages the world's most accessible and inclusive Olympics in history
- Supporting goals, objectives and activities of existing disability organizations
- Collaborating with all sectors of society to achieve accessibility and inclusion goals



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

CONCLUSION

The Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project has spent the past six months learning about the disability landscape, establishing and fostering relationships, and determining the best means to apply the vision put forward by Vancouver City Councillors Tim Louis and Sam Sullivan.

The progress that has been made over the course of the first phase of the project has been substantial and there is excitement about moving forward. As a result, expectations have been raised in many organizations and individuals across British Columbia.

It is the hope of the project coordinator and the advisory committee that this report contains a substantial case and compelling recommendations to see the continuation of the Accessible/Inclusive Cities and Communities Project.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

APPENDIX 1

This is the complete text from the motion passed unanimously by Vancouver City Council on October 14, 2003:

Establishment of 2010 Vision for British Columbians with Disabilities

Mover: Councillor Tim Louis

Seconder: Councillor Sam Sullivan

WHEREAS, the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games should benefit all British Columbians and provide long term legacies;

AND WHEREAS, citizens with disabilities support the creation of a vision for a province that welcomes and includes the participation and presence of all people with disabilities in all aspects of the community;

AND WHEREAS, by the year 2010, British Columbians wan the world to appreciate British Columbia as a jurisdiction where the contributions of all citizens are enabled and welcomed;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Vancouver City Council send a letter to the Premier of British Columbia asking that the Government of British Columbia endorse the effort to create, in partnership with other municipalities in British Columbia, a 2010 Vision, and to take a lead role in its development;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Vancouver City Council endorses the development of a 2010 Vision for British Columbians with disabilities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, staff report back on options for how the City of Vancouver could participate in the creation of this 2010 Vision;

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, Vancouver City Council write to all other municipal governments in British Columbia asking that they endorse the creation of this Vision, and ask for one member of their respective Councils to serve as a contact person.



APPENDIX 2

DEFINING DISABILITY

Statistics Canada currently accepts the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), which refers to disability as “the interrelationship between body functions, activities and social participation, while recognizing that the environment provides either barriers or facilitators.”³⁰ With such expansive criteria, a disability can be physical, sensory, or mental, could have emerged from birth, developed in childhood, or taken shape later in life, and has the ability to produce varying effects and challenges.

The ICF was developed by the World Health Organization in 2001 to emphasize health and functioning rather than one’s disability. In an earlier definition introduced in 1980, “disability began where health ended; once you were disabled, you were in a separate category.”³¹ In updating and expanding the terminology, there are two key corrections to make note of.

First, the ICF now takes into consideration one’s ability to function as a contributing member of society. From a public policy perspective, this is a far more useful research tool to measure a person’s capabilities, irrespective of which particular impairment he or she is stricken with.

Second, it acknowledges that every human being has the capability of deteriorating health, thereby universalizing the likelihood of developing a disability. Disability does not discriminate, which in turn makes it an issue applicable to the entire human condition rather than specific to a minority of the population.

According to Statistics Canada:

Seniors constitute the fastest growing population group in Canada. In 2001, it was estimated that 3.92 million Canadians were 65 years of age or older, a figure that is two thirds more than in 1981. As the “baby boomers” (born between 1946 and 1965) age, the seniors population is expected to reach 6.7 million in 2021 and 9.2 million in 2041 (nearly one in four Canadians). In fact, the growth of the seniors’ population will account for close to half of the growth of the overall Canadian population in the next four decades.*³²

These growth figures are alarming when cross referenced against Statistics Canada’s 1991 Health & Activity Limitation Survey (HALS), which determined that 27.1% aged between 55 and 64, 36.9% aged between 65 to 74, 56.8% aged between 75 and 85, and 83.8% older than 85, had a disability (NOTE: it should



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

be pointed out that these figures derived from HALS are far less comprehensive than those compiled through the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS 2001), which was implemented after Statistics Canada came under criticism for its limited explanation of disability). By 2010, baby boomers hitting retirement age will constitute an additional 1.4 million working age Canadians that have some form of disability.³³

As of 2001, 3.6 million Canadians living in households reported having activity limitations, representing a disability rate of 12.4%.³⁴ In British Columbia, this figure jumps to 14% of the province's population.³⁵ The most deceptive aspect about these statistics, however, is that they only reflect those people living in a household. This methodology therefore leaves a significant segment of those suffering from disabilities entirely out of the equation. As an example, these figures do not take those living in institutions into consideration. They also do not include those with a disability who have no fixed address. Within the framework of the ICF, this represents thousands of people from across the city, and indeed, the province as a whole.

Disability is a far more applicable term than even a decade ago, and over the coming years, is a consideration that will affect every Canadian either directly or indirectly.



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

APPENDIX 3

This is a compilation of the organizations, agencies and individuals that the project coordinator has met with directly over the last six months. This list also includes the numerous groups that were encountered as a result of participation in various conferences, events, presentations and speaking engagements.

2010 LegaciesNow Society

Acorn Canada

Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)

BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society

BC Blind Sports

BC Council for Families

BC Federation of Labour

BC Government and Service Employees' Union

BC Human Resources Management Association

BC Hydro

BC Special Olympics

BroadCom Canada Ltd.

Canadian Abilities Foundation

Canadian Barrier Free Design Inc.

Canadian Business for Social Responsibility

Canadian Mental Health Association

Canadian National Institute for the Blind

Center for Tourism Policy & Research

City of Vancouver

City of Vancouver - Community Services

City of Vancouver - Office of the City Clerk

City of Vancouver - Office of the Mayor

City of Vancouver, Streets Design Branch

Coast Foundation Society (1974)

Coast Mental Health Foundation

Demal Services Inc.

Developmental Disabilities Association

Douglas College

Fast Track to Employment

Food & Service Resource Group

Fraser Health Authority

Government of British Columbia - Ministry of Small Business & Economic Development, Ministry of Human Resources, Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities

Government of Canada – Department of Canadian Heritage, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (Federal Treaty Negotiation Office,



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

British Columbia Region)
Harcourt Enterprises, Inc.
Hey-way'-noqu' Healing Circle for Addictions Society
Information and Advocacy Network
Information Outreach Ltd.
Leadership Vancouver
London Metropolitan University
Loreth Associates
Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation
Mainstream Association for Proactive Community Living
Microboard Association
Mission Association for Community Living
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada
Neil Squire Foundation
Office of the Advocate for Service Quality
Office of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Minister's
Regional Office
Onni Group of Companies
Open Learning Agency
ORW
PhoenixRising Solutions
Polaris Employment Services
Rick Hansen Man In Motion Foundation
S.D. #34 (Abbotsford)
Sharing Our Futures Foundation
Simon Fraser University
Simon Fraser University - Graduate Urban Studies Program
Simon Fraser University Childcare Society
Social Planning & Research Council of BC (SPARC)
Society for Disability Arts and Culture
Solstice Consulting
Surrey Tourism & Convention Association
The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
Tourism Vancouver
TransLink
University of British Columbia
University of British Columbia - Campus Planning & Development
United Way of the Lower Mainland
United Way Fraser Valley
VanCity Savings Credit Union
Vancouver 2010
Vancouver 2010 - LegaciesNow Society
Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Foundation
Vancouver General Hospital
Vancouver Park Board
Vancouver Public Library
Vancouver Resource Society
VANOC
Vella Microboard Association
Volunteer Burnaby
West Coast City & Nature Sightseeing
West End Seniors' Network
Western Institute for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Workers' Compensation Board of BC



APPENDIX 4

The following list of community accessibility summaries has been taken directly from SPARC BC's 2003/04 Community Accessibility Contacts publication *Access Links* (http://www.sparc.bc.ca/accessibility/documents/access_links.pdf).

1) Municipalities with an advisory committee

City of Burnaby

The Burnaby Access Advisory Committee has worked to review accessibility of the local Metrotown shopping centre, and has produced three editions of the *Burnaby Access Guidebook*. The committee has also advised Council about amendments to zoning bylaws related to designated parking for people with disabilities.

The committee does public awareness campaigns about accessibility in Burnaby, monitors the need for audible pedestrian signals and curb cuts, administers the annual Accessibility Renovations program for city facilities.

The Burnaby Access Advisory Committee is developing the development of accessible housing guidelines in conjunction with the City of Burnaby housing committee. The committee will also review the adequacy of accessible transportation in Burnaby, and will continue to monitor the need for audible pedestrian signals, curb cuts, sidewalk improvements and public volume control telephones. They will establish a priority list of access renovations to city facilities.

Colwood, Langford, Highlands & Metchosin (4 communities)

The committee has designed the new Bear Mountain Arena to be accessible, improved access to the West Shore Parks and Recreation societies, and works to improve access for people with disabilities.

They plan to work on BC Transit accessibility and parking rules for people with disabilities. They are also looking at a senior's medical equipment assessment project.

City of Coquitlam

The Mayor's Committee is very active in evaluating new buildings in the community to ensure accessibility. The committee is also engaged in annual accessibility awards each June. They participate at the annual Teddy Bear Picnic



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

to promote accessibility in the community. They support children and youth with disabilities in recreational programs by providing staff.

The committee maintains an ongoing dialogue with city departments to address any accessibility related issues that arise.

Town of Creston

Creston has implemented curb cuts, designated parking spots for people with disabilities, audible pedestrian signals at traffic lights, and accessible town facilities. They plan to continue their present policies into the future to ensure accessibility for community members with disabilities.

City of Duncan

Duncan has installed audible pedestrian signals and implemented scooter and wheelchair access around utility poles. They support disability awareness week each year. Duncan has also processed a Streets Bylaw, which provides for the issuance of \$15 per month Disabled Employee Parking Exemption Permit, that allows employees with disabilities to park for extended periods in two hour parking zones. The staff has also supported requests from the advisory committee for the City to install ten new wheelchair ramps each year at a cost of over \$600 per ramp, and have developed a priority list for installing those ramps.

City of Kamloops

Committee members articulate concerns on local building code issues with city staff and council. They have advocated for curb cuts, audible traffic signals, and disability awareness programs. The committee operates an 'adopt-a-bus-bench' or 'curb' program for snow clearing in the winter. There have been accessibility improvements made to several public bathrooms in Kamloops. The committee plans to continue working on awareness of accessibility issues.

Township of Langley

The Township of Langley is addressing accessibility for people with disabilities in several ways. The committee discussing a proposal to modify some intersections to increase curb cuts and enhance community accessibility. They are ensuring accessibility provisions in the Building Code are followed, and are working to improve accessibility at existing developments.



District of Maple Ridge and District of Pitt Meadows

The committee develops recommendations relating to transportation, facilities design, upgrades and parking issues. It is working with various district departments to improve accessibility and plans an accessibility simulation event within the community.

City of New Westminster

New Westminster has installed audible crosswalk signals and crosswalk signals that count down numerically. The City continues to implement curb cuts and is working to make washrooms accessible in recreation facilities. The committee is working to establish an accessibility policy. They plan a program to increase accessibility to facilities and public areas.

City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, City of West Vancouver

The North Shore Advisory Committee has developed a set of pedestrian access guidelines. They have contributed to a taxi bylaw for accessible cabs, as well as the implementation of audible pedestrian signals. The committee is involved in the construction and renovation of buildings in their communities to ensure accessibility is maintained and improved.

The North Shore Advisory Committee plans to continue having input into construction and renovations and is developing an advocacy role related to municipal issues.

City of Penticton

The City of Penticton and the Advisory Committee introduced a temporary parking permit program for people with disabilities. They have done an accessibility audit of city buildings, and published a manual entitled *Accessibility Penticton*. The committee successfully lobbied for an elevator in City Hall, and provided input into an arena renovation and fitness room upgrade.

The Advisory Committee plans to have input into waterfront planning, downtown planning, downtown parking plans, library and museum design.

City of Prince George

SNAC works on 'Falls Prevention', as well as improving access at various civic buildings with handrails and electronic door openers, and are developing and ensuring the use of a building access checklist. The committee reports that local



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

building inspectors have noticed more acceptance of accessibility concerns by designers and project managers. The committee has proposed changes and improved maintenance of sidewalk standards, and has advocated for better access to local pools.

SNAC is planning to work with other organizations and civic departments to improve accessibility. They are planning to develop access to a multiplex for people with disabilities.

Town of Sidney

The Advisory Committee has added accessibility provisions to the local building bylaw. Sidney has added audible pedestrian signals to intersections, and curb cuts. The committee regularly reviews proposed developments and advocates for accessibility in the community.

Town of Smithers

The Disabled Advisory Committee has helped to implement a curb cut program. Smithers has increased the number of parking spaces for people with disabilities and added audible pedestrian signals at intersections. The Disabled Advisory Committee has been recreated as a part of the town's commitment to accessibility. Smithers is planning a new municipal office that will be accessible.

District of Sooke

The Taskforce was formed to address parks accessibility in Sooke. They have formed an access policy for Sooke and outlying area parks, especially natural, passive undeveloped parks. The Taskforce is testing the surface material on their Oceanfront Trail with the goal of making the entire trail accessible to people with mobility impairments. They are reviewing access issues, advertising and other issues for parks in the area.

The Taskforce plans the placement of park benches in wheelchair friendly designs, and intends to gather input from people with disabilities for future improvements.

City of Vancouver

SACDI has recommended changes to bylaws, policies and practices governed by Vancouver City Council. These changes include building codes, transportation and taxi licensing, and the ratio and width of parking spaces for people with disabilities. They have also formed strong working relationships between the



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

community of people with disabilities and city staff resulting in staff regularly consulting with them on all issues concerning people with disabilities.

SACDI plans to increase public consultations on disability issues. They also plan to network with some Lower Mainland civic advisory groups. They wish to integrate a 'disability lens' as a normal civic practice, and to broaden the scope of SACDI membership to include all five disability groups (physical, emotional, psychological, intellectual and sensory).

2) Municipalities with a formalized relationship with a community group

Town of Princeton

The BC Paraplegic Association's representatives plan to work with the town of Princeton to improve the accessibility of various sites in the community.

City of Williams Lake

People in Motion, in cooperation with BC Housing, constructed a 22-unit complex with full accessibility. They also built a walkway to aid tenants in accessing the shopping areas of Williams Lake.

3) Municipalities without an advisory committee

Village of Alert Bay

Alert Bay has implemented parking spaces for people with disabilities, ramps at all public buildings, and curb cuts to sidewalks. They have a boardwalk that was built to be accessible.

City of Armstrong

The City of Armstrong has instituted curb cuts for accessibility in every project, including residential neighborhoods. They require parking spaces for people with disabilities in development zoning, and those in place are enforced.

Village of Ashcroft

Ashcroft has a paved walkway so that pedestrians and motorized carts can safely access medical and social services.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

Village of Burns Lake

Burns Lake has undertaken an informal survey of accessibility issues. They are seeking funding to improve accessibility in the community, and have set aside funds to improve the accessibility of the Village office.

Village of Cache Creek

Cache Creek Community Hall improvements include a ramp and designated parking for people with disabilities. All new sidewalks include corner curb cuts. Cache Creek has audible walk signals at all light controlled intersections.

City of Castlegar

Castlegar has numerous curb cuts and plans to continue upgrading sidewalks as needed.

City of Courtenay

Courtenay has implemented audible pedestrian signals and installed wheelchair ramps and parking for people with disabilities. Courtenay has accessible pedestrian crosswalk buttons, and has an ongoing wheelchair ramp program.

City of Cranbrook

Cranbrook has installed wheelchair ramps in downtown sidewalks, as well as parking stalls for people with disabilities. They have audible pedestrian signals at crosswalks for the visually impaired, and plan to incorporate accessibility measures into all new projects

Village of Cumberland

No description provided.

City of Dawson Creek

Dawson Creek has initiated a program of curb cuts. They built a ramp into City Hall in 2002, and they plan to install an elevator in 2004. Where practical wheelchair ramps have been added and washrooms made accessible.

Township of Esquimalt

Esquimalt has an Access Awareness Walk Program. It has formed an accessibility committee for a recreation centre revitalization project.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

City of Fernie

Sidewalks in Fernie have curb cuts for wheelchair access. Fernie is developing a plan to make all city facilities barrier free within the next five to ten years.

Town of Gibsons

Gibsons has installed a switchback trail down to their waterfront trail to make it more accessible. They have new sidewalks in Gibsons Landing, as well as dedicated parking spaces for people with disabilities. They are considering a small transit system to take people from Lower to Upper Gibsons and around the community.

Town of Golden

Golden has raised awareness of disability issues in the community, and made council chambers accessible. Discussion is currently underway about installing accessible public washrooms downtown.

City of Greenwood

Greenwood has parking and wheelchair access to the Community Hall. They replaced the ramp at City Hall for wheelchair access, and built an access ramp to the band shell in the City Park. There are accessible washrooms in the City Hall, and they plan to make the community art club accessible for people with disabilities.

Village of Hazelton

No description provided.

District of Hope

No description provided.

District of Hudson's Hope

Hudson's Hope is improving access to municipal buildings for people with disabilities. They also clear snow from the driveways of seniors for no charge in the winter. Hudson's Hope is planning major renovations at the municipal office, which include an elevator to all floors. The new swimming pool has a 'beach' style entry which is more accessible.



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

District of 100 Mile House

100 Mile House addresses accessibility issues in long-term planning of new subdivisions. This planning requires curbs and sidewalks to be accessible, and requires accessibility in new and rebuilt infrastructures.

Village of Kaslo

Kaslo has ensured that their sidewalks are wheelchair accessible with curb cuts.

City of Kimberley

Kimberley ensures all developments are constructed to standards.

District of Lake Country

Lake Country addressed accessibility during the building of the municipal offices. The Community Accessibility Liaison plans to continue bringing accessibility concerns to Council when they arise.

City of Langley

Langley ensures that facilities are maintained at a high level of accessibility.

District of Lillooet

Lillooet has upgraded sidewalks in the downtown core for easier and safer accessibility. The recreation and the community centres are accessible. Lillooet requires that new projects be accessible, which includes appropriate washroom access and counter height.

District of Logan Lake

Logan Lake has standard wheelchair access on new constructions, sidewalks and public buildings.

District of Mackenzie

No description provided.

Village of Masset

Masset responds to specific requests such as the creation of new parking spaces



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

for people with disabilities, and implementing curb cuts. They ensure that new construction by the Village such as a new health care facility will be accessible.

Village of New Denver

New Denver has accessible washrooms in the Village Park. They have curb cuts on the sidewalks and wheelchair ramp access to the community hall.

Village of Port Alice

Port Alice has wheelchair ramps, parking spaces for people with disabilities, walkways, and accessible washrooms. The local Lions Club is currently working on providing a sidewalk and ramp to connect the hospital and the seniors' centre.

Town of Port McNeil

Port McNeil has improved sidewalk access with curb cuts. They have painted all steep edges yellow at the request of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

City of Prince Rupert

Prince Rupert has curb cuts, and wheelchair ramps into municipal buildings.

Village of Radium Hot Springs

The Village of Radium will be rewriting a zoning bylaw to address issues of accessibility in the new official community plan.

City of Richmond

There is an informal Advisory Committee to Council titled the Richmond Committee on Disability. The City has worked to identify and improve bus stop locations for accessibility, established a resource centre for people with disabilities and put in place a reporting process for outdoor hazards such as uneven sidewalks.

District of Saanich

Saanich has recently created a thorough and complete 'adaptable housing policy' that ensures accessibility in all future constructions. This includes zoning amendments, design guidelines, and specifics that help create a more accessible community.



District of Salmon Arm

Salmon Arm ensures wheelchair accessibility in their sidewalk improvements. They have audible pedestrian crossing signals, accessible public benches, and parking stalls for people with disabilities.

Township of Spallumcheen

The Municipal office is accessible, as are the washrooms. There are few other municipal facilities because Spallumcheen is a large, rural municipality with a small population. Spallumcheen has major renovations planned for the civic arena (which is jointly owned with the City of Armstrong) and accessibility will be addressed in the design process.

District of Sparwood

Sparwood has curb cuts on sidewalks and additional parking for people with disabilities at the recreation centre. They have had a lift installed at the local arena, new ramps, and a bell system added at the front doors to the municipal office. They continue to address accessibility as issues are brought forward by the public and department heads.

City of Trail

The City has installed wheelchair ramps on city downtown sidewalks and high traffic areas. City facilities, including washrooms, are accessible for people with disabilities. They plan the installation of automatic door openers in the recreation facility.

City of Victoria

Building Code compliance is required on all new and renovated buildings in Victoria.

Village of Warfield

No description provided.

4) Other municipalities

City of Abbotsford

Village of Anmore

Village of Belcarra

Municipality of Bowen Island



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

**District of Campbell River
District of Central Saanich
Village of Chase
District of Chetwynd
City of Chilliwack
Village of Clinton
District of Coldstream
Town of Comox
District of Delta
District of Elkford
City of Enderby
Town of Fort Nelson
District of Fort St. James
City of Fort St. John
Village of Fraser Lake
Village of Fruitvale
Village of Gold River
City of Grand Forks
Village of Granisle
Village of Harrison Hot Springs
District of Houston
District of Invermere
City of Kelowna
District of Kent
Village of Keremeos
District of Kitimat
Town of Ladysmith
Town of Lake Cowichan
Village of Lions Bay
Village of Lumby
Village of Lytton
City of Merritt
Village of Midway
District of Mission
Village of Nakusp
City of Nanaimo
City of Nelson
District of New Hazelton
Village of McBride
Village of Montrose
District of North Cowichan
District of North Saanich
Corporation of the District of Oak Bay
Town of Oliver**



**THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005**

**Town of Osoyoos
City of Parksville
District of Peachland
Village of Pemberton
City of Port Alberni
Village of Port Clements
City of Port Coquitlam
District of Port Edward
District of Port Hardy
City of Port Moody
Village of Pouce Coupe
Town of Qualicum Beach
City of Quesnel
City of Rossland
District of Powell River
City of Revelstoke
Village of Salmo
Village of Sayward
District of Sechelt
Sechelt Indian Government District
District of Sicamous
Village of Silverton
Village of Slocan
District of Squamish
District of Stewart
District of Summerland
City of Surrey
Village of Tahsis
District of Taylor
City of Terrace
District of Tofino
District of Tumbler Ridge
Village of Telkwa
District of Ucluelet
Village of Valemount
District of Vanderhoof
District of Wells
Resort Municipality of Whistler
City of Vernon
City of White Rock
Town of View Royal
Village of Zeballos**



THE ACCESSIBLE/INCLUSIVE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES PROJECT
JANUARY, 2005

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JANUARY, 2005

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