kelowna.ca

Everyone Welcome:
The Kelowna Accessibility Plan

City of Kelowna

March 2025

Land acknowledgement

The City of Kelowna is committed to reconciliation and building meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan People.

The City of Kelowna is strengthened by the rich history and ongoing contributions of the Syilx Okanagan Nation, whose ancestors have cared for these lands since time immemorial. We also recognize the many Indigenous Peoples who call Kelowna home today, as well as those from around the world who contribute to the city's vibrancy and diversity.

Acknowledging the land is an act of respect and gratitude to the Syilx Okanagan People, whose stewardship has shaped these lands. It reminds us of our shared responsibility to honour this history, deepen our understanding of the past, and actively engage in reconciliation for a more inclusive and equitable future.

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Executive summary

The City of Kelowna is dedicated to advancing accessibility for all its residents and visitors, particularly individuals with disabilities, by removing barriers and creating a fully inclusive environment. In alignment with the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, the City of Kelowna Accessibility Plan aims to ensure that all members of the community—regardless of their abilities or disabilities—can equally participate in public life.

The Accessibility Plan is not just a provincial mandate; it's a crucial step toward unlocking the potential of people with disabilities and enabling them to fully participate in society. In 2017 (the most recent year local census data on people with disabilities is available), 36,350 people aged 15 and older reported at least one disability in Kelowna. Provincially, BC's disability rate rose 3.9% between 2017 and 2022 - to a provincial level of 28.6%. Further, as the population ages, the disability rate increases. By 2022, 22.6% of the population was aged 65 and older and this segment is growing rapidly as more people choose Kelowna as their retirement destination. This plan addresses the real need to create an inclusive society where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can contribute and thrive.

This plan reflects the City's commitment to addressing barriers and fostering accessibility. It builds on important steps the City has already undertaken, including the Community for All Ages & Abilities Action Plan (2017). It focuses on key municipal areas including public spaces, programs, services, transportation, and employment. Through a collaborative process with key stakeholders—including the City of Kelowna Accessibility Committee, community members, Happy Cities, Meaningful Access Consulting, and City staff—the plan has been designed to create a more inclusive, accessible, and adaptable urban environment; while also accounting for the financial balances and limitations that the City is responsible for managing.

Community engagement

The plan was developed through comprehensive community engagement to ensure that it meets the needs of residents and reflects their diverse experiences. The City provided several ways for people to give input on the accessibility plan.

- **Surveys:** A plain language and tabbable[1] digital survey, offered both online and in paper format at City Hall and other locations.

- **Focus groups:** Two in-person facilitated sessions to hear from residents. Attendees were offered honoraria for their participation.

- **Community pop-up events:** Five pop-up engagement events were held in Kelowna at visible locations in the community and alongside public events or a strategic location that is well—frequented by members of the disability community.

  - Equitable outreach: We conducted in-person engagement at Trailside, a temporary housing project for seniors and people with disabilities transitioning out of homelessness, as well as engagement at Pathways Abilities Society, which supports seniors and people with cognitive disabilities. We also located our pop-ups at locations and events where a range of community members were present.

- **One-on-one engagement:** Follow-up conversations with key stakeholders who expressed interest during the focus groups.

- **Community conversations:** Meaningful Access Consulting, also conducted site visits and informal outreach, gathering first-hand observations on Kelowna's accessibility features and receiving direct feedback from community members.

Key findings and priorities

Through these engagement activities, Kelowna residents and community members shared diverse experiences with disability experiences and caring for those with disabilities. The list below summarizes the key priorities we heard under each service areas:

- **Built environment**: Enhancing public infrastructure, standardizing building and housing features, and addressing physical obstacles.
- **Transportation**: Improving sidewalk connectivity, snow removal, public transportation accessibility, and expanding services like handyDART.
- **Programs and services**: Reducing cost barriers, making City programs more inclusive, and providing sensory-friendly spaces.

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[1] A "tabbable" website is one that is capable of being navigated or focused solely by using the Tab key.

- **Information and communication**: Enhancing accessibility for digital and nondigital communication methods, improving navigation of City resources, and increasing customer feedback channels.
- **Employment**: Removing barriers for City employees with disabilities, creating more accessible hiring processes, and increasing awareness of the value of the disability community in hiring processes.

Conclusion

The City of Kelowna Accessibility Plan strives to ensure that all residents can participate fully in the community. The actions in this plan were developed through a comprehensive community engagement process, which provided valuable insights from residents and community organizations and highlighted key areas for improvement. The plan demonstrates the City's commitments to create a more accessible and inclusive Kelowna for all, by taking action to remove barriers related to mobility, transportation, communication, programs, and employment.

Kelowna Accessibility Plan: Recommendations

The Kelowna Accessibility Plan is designed to be implemented over the next decade, with short-term (2025-2026), mid-term (2027-2029), and long-term (2029 and beyond) actions.

General		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
1. Ensure ongoing engagement and accountability throughout the implementation of this Plan.	1.1 Develop a process to report every year on the City's progress in implementing the Accessibility Plan, and to review and update the Plan every three years.	Short-term
	1.2 Designate a responsible staff person or department to oversee and implement the Accessibility Plan. Best practice: Ideally, this person should have lived personal or professional experience with disability or with the barriers faced by members of the disability community.	Short-term
2. Define corporate language for accessibility creating clear guidelines on how the City should communicate about and implement accessibility measures, ensuring consistent terminology and practices across all departments.	2.1 Define a City-wide approach to accessibility and universal design best practice integration across all departments.	Mid-term

General		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
3. Establish a consistent approach to engagement with people with disabilities.	3.1 Recognize the financial burdens that many people with disabilities face and provide remuneration for the lived-experience expertise requested of people with disabilities in municipal engagement, where appropriate. Best practice: Opt-in financial compensation for people with disabilities is also recommended for in-depth engagement (such as focus groups or interviews). Should this not be financially feasible, offering municipal Parks & Recreation passes (monthly, family, or 10-pack) are a lower cost alternative that reflects the value of participation and provides a real and direct benefit to participants.	Short-term
	3.2 Together with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, identify how people with disabilities should be engaged in policy and decision-making processes.	Short-term
	3.3 Ensure that the City's engagement process is inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities.	Short-term

General		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
4. Ensure that accessibility is integrated into the financial planning process for the City.	4.1 Ensure sufficient funding is allocated in all relevant operating and capital budgets to implement accessible and universal design features from the outset of all projects, infrastructure and facility design plans. Best practice: This should include projects related to digital infrastructure, transportation, training, and policy development - not just built environment. Best practice: Develop a process to provide oversight and guidance on how accessibility measures are budgeted for, this increases the likelihood that it receives adequate consideration when budgeting for larger projects and initiatives.	Short-term
5. Conduct an accessibility review of emergency preparedness plans.	5.1 Develop a multi-channel emergency communications and response strategy for all City facilities that integrates the needs of individuals using mobility devices (such as using evacuation chairs in multi-storey buildings) and those who are Deaf or hard of hearing (such as integrating visual alarms or other visual communications).	Mid-term

General		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**

	5.2 Work with the Regional Emergency Management Program to increase accessibility and accessibility-related information for evacuees City facilities use for reception and lodging centres.
	    5.2.1 Work with the climate action team to coordinate strategies with buildings and infrastructure development teams.
	    5.2.2 Consider offering the public ways to access fresh and purified air during forest fire events and high smoke.
		Mid-term

	5.3 For large-scale emergencies, develop an evacuation plan that considers the needs of those with disabilities communication and access needs.	Mid-term
	5.4 Support the Regional Emergency Management Program's development of a community support plan which will create community connections with local social service and support agencies for those with disabilities to build preparedness and emergency response.	Mid-term
	5.5 Advocate to EMCR for increased accessibility resources and requirements for evacuees with disabilities.	Mid-term
6. Increase community awareness and appreciation for people with disabilities	6.1 Explore the potential of adding an Accessible Award category within the Civic & Community Awards to recognize businesses or organizations making strides to improve the lives for people with disabilities.	Short-term

Built environment		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
7. Ensure accessibility and universal design principles are included during the planning process for new City facilities and amenities.	7.1 Develop policy and adopt design standards for all new or renovated City facilities and pathways on facility properties adhering to industry best practices (such as the RHF Accessibility Certified Gold, or CSA B651-23).	Short-term
	7.2 Within RFP procurement, specifically within social value evaluation, include criteria that encourage proponents to account for accessibility.	Short-term
8. Improve accessibility of City facilities through audits, upgrades and phased implementation.	8.1 Enable staff in key roles to pursue Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) as professional development and internal capacity building.	Short-term
	8.2 Perform accessibility audits of all public-facing City facilities that have yet to be audited, identifying all accessibility barriers. (physical, vision, hearing, sensory, etc.) 8.2.1 Establish annual targets to ensure that all remaining audits are completed within five years. 8.2.2 Once new audits are complete, have the RHFAC-certified staff member assess whether 2017 audits are sufficient to establish priority enhancements. If yes, proceed to prioritization. If not, re-audit facilities that were part of the 2017 initiative. Best practice: Accessibility standards change over time. To maintain best practices, audit all public buildings every ten years.	Mid-term

	8.3 Develop a prioritization framework for accessibility improvements based on factors such as facility usage, public feedback, compliance with accessibility standards, and overall impact on community inclusion.	Mid-term
	8.4 Create a phased implementation plan to address priority recommendations identified in accessibility audits, detailing timelines, responsibilities, and funding sources.	Mid-term
9. Improve accessibility of City parks and playgrounds.	9.1 Determine opportunities to enhance accessibility in parks and prioritize accessibility in parks across the community. Where parks are already very accessible, add amenities that can create community hubs of accessibility (such as creating pathways to universally designed picnic tables or adding additional equipment).	Short-term
	9.2 Review opportunities to include playspaces that meet various sensory needs, such as rest stations and quiet spaces.	Short-term
	9.3 Develop and implement a strategy that prioritizes existing parks to retrofit to improve accessibility based on the outcomes of the parks' condition assessment.	Mid-term
	9.4 Develop and implement regular maintenance policies for accessibility features, such as Mobi-Mats, ensuring that they are functional and used for their intended purpose.	Short-term
	9.5 Include picnic tables and benches in the equipment replacement cycle to be universally designed.	Short-term
	9.6 Create complete paths of accessibility by ensuring that accessible features are along a path of travel that connects with accessible parking stalls.	Short-term

	9.7 Develop and adopt accessible landscape design standards for parks, playgrounds, and open spaces.	Mid-term
10. Review the City's washrooms from an accessibility lens while incorporating opening hours and access to public washrooms.	10.1 Identify and prioritize public washrooms in need of accessibility upgrades and safety improvements.	Short-term
	10.2 Implement accessibility upgrades to washrooms prioritized in the action above.	Mid-term
11. Develop a plan to increase accessibility to the lake, ensuring that everyone can access outdoor recreation opportunities.	11.1 Explore opportunities for partnerships with local organizations that provide outdoor adaptive recreational services in Kelowna.	Short-term
	11.2 Consider opportunities to provide complete access to the beach for people using wheelchairs or mobility devices, such as through boardwalks or temporary pathways (e.g. Mobi-Mats).	Mid-term
	11.3 Consider installing accessible kayak or canoe boat launch infrastructure.	Short-term
12. Increase access to adaptable and accessible housing.	12.1 When implemented, review the new BC Building Code requirements for adaptable housing units and seek ways to increase the supply of adaptable housing.	Short-term
	12.2 Develop a standard and minimum unit percentage for including accessible housing in large developments. ==Best practice:== Prepare for the upcoming changes in the BC Building Code (2027 implementation of adaptable housing standards) to position yourself as leaders in accessible unit implementation.	Mid-term

Transportation		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
The transportation recommendations are linked to the Transportation Accessibility Strategy, which is currently under development. The Kelowna Accessibility Plan includes transportation recommendations, in line with the Strategy.		
13. Develop a Transportation Accessibility Strategy	13.1 Develop an Accessible Transportation Strategy focused on transportation infrastructure design guidelines and operations and maintenance practices. Ensure it follows best practices in accessibility and universal design. This action is also identified in the 2040 Transportation Master Plan and will incorporate community feedback gained from the Accessibility Plan.	Short-term
14. Complete an Accessible Parking Program Review to increase the overall availability of accessible parking stalls in Kelowna	14.1 Ensure both existing and new City facilities have an adequate number of off-street accessible parking spaces to meet or exceed minimums outlined in Zoning Bylaw 12375	Short-term
	14.2 Ensure key pedestrian destinations, parks, and business districts have adequate availability of short-term on-street accessible parking spaces	Mid-term
	14.3 Develop a standard design for on-street accessible parking stalls with accessible curb ramps.	Short-term
	14.4 Improve controls and enforcement to ensure the proper use of City-owned accessible parking stalls.	Long-term
15. Improve public transit and handyDART accessibility	15.1 Continue to work with BC Transit to identify opportunities to increase transit service frequency, including off-peak, evening, and weekend transit service	Ongoing

Transportation		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
	15.2 As bus stops are upgraded, ensure BC Transit's accessibility design guidelines are considered and implemented where possible.	Ongoing
	15.3 Advocate and support BC transit to improve handyDART service (e.g. booking process and extending handyDART services on Sundays and holidays).	Short-term
	15.4 Review opportunities to enhance access to alternative transportation options at bus exchanges when conducting capital upgrades.	Long-term
16. Improve accessibility of sidewalks and pathways	16.1 When updating the Transportation Master Plan list of recommended active transportation projects in the future, consider gaps in the sidewalk and pathway network as well as areas of high active transportation activity and key destinations such as schools, parks, community facilities, and commercial areas.	Mid-term
17. Improve accessibility of intersections and crosswalks	17.1 When upgrading intersections and crosswalks, ensure that appropriate accessibility upgrades are incorporated. Examples could include accessible curb ramps, Tactile Walking Surface Indicators, pedestrian pushbuttons, accessible pedestrian signals, and pedestrian countdown timers.	Mid-term
	17.2 Ensure users needs (including those with limited mobility, who may need more time to cross) are considered when setting crosswalk signal timings.	Mid-term

Transportation		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
18. Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and other users	18.1 Continue to pursue opportunities to educate the public on safe and respectful behaviour for all users including cyclists and micromobility users on multi-use pathways.	Short-term
	18.2 Continue to explore emerging technologies and solutions to improve safety and accessibility for all users, including people with sight loss, within the road right-of-way and transportation network (e.g. island platform bus stops and shared pathways).	Ongoing
19. Ensure the transportation network is legible and easy to navigate	19.1 Continue to provide wayfinding on key pedestrian and cyclist corridors and at key destinations	Ongoing

Programs and services		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
20. Determine opportunities to collaborate with key organizations to maximize the impact of public funding.	20.1 Create and/or deepen partnerships with private operators—such as Pathways, People in Motion, CNIB, and CRIS Adaptive Adventures—to better coordinate resources and understanding of community needs.	Short-term

Programs and services

Recommendation	Action	Timeline
21. In recreation facilities, offer low-sensory/quiet times or spaces for individuals who are neurodivergent or sensitive to sensory stimulation.	21.1 Create and execute a plan that offers for sensory-friendly times and spaces in key public spaces and facilities including arts, cultural and recreational facilities as well City-led public events.	Short-term - mid term
	21.2 Increase sensory accessibility by creating sensory kits and offering them for loan at City facilities. Best practice: Sensory kits generally include items such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, quiet activities, stress balls, etc.	Short-term
22. Provide education and disability awareness training to City staff.	22.1 Continue to offer, and where possible, expand, specific training to staff who deliver programs and services on how to accommodate varying abilities and flexible criteria for program participation, such as swim lessons.	Short-term
	22.2 Create a resource for best practices and accessibility-related policies and procedures that can be easily found on an internal document-sharing platform.	Short-term
23. Raise awareness among public event organizers around increasing accessibility at permitted events.	23.1 Develop accessibility resources and toolkits for event organizers to improve inclusion at City-permitted events.	Short-term
	23.2 Require organizers to complete an accessibility checklist or outline an accessibility plan to obtain an event permit.	Short-term

Information and communication		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
24. Improve communication about accessibility features and services.	24.1 Develop a strategy to communicate existing accessibility features in City-owned/operated spaces and services to the public. 24.1.1 Review and update the City of Kelowna's "Accessibility" webpage. Ensure it is easy to find and provides information and links to adaptive and inclusive programs, information, and services. Resource pages on what to communicate on an accessible webpage and on individual facility webpages can be found in Appendix B and on hirefortalent.ca and accessibleemployers.ca/. 24.1.2 Create a listing of accessible features in City spaces, programs, and services; make this list available both digitally and in print; and update and distribute it annually. 24.1.3 Map and create an inventory of accessible routes and amenities throughout City facilities; share this resource publicly to increase the use of accessibility features already in place.	Mid-term
25. Improve accessibility of the City of Kelowna's communications.	25.1 Develop an Accessible Communication Policy that outlines the standards of practice and procedures for communications across all City documents, forms, bills, meetings and events across all City departments.	Short-term
	25.2 Develop and implement a plan to increase digital accessibility.	Short-term

Information and communication		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
	25.3 Develop a policy or set of best practices to support accessibility where important information is disseminated by the City. Best practice: Develop a system for ensuring that all key City communications are available in digital and non-digital formats.	Short-term
	25.4 Have a checklist to make sure all PDFs are accessible and compatible with screen readers.	Mid-term
26. Review the website overall for accessibility moving towards meeting the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) best practices.	26.1 Develop interim steps to increase the accessibility of the website including adding or using: ALT-text, plain language, increased photo use and accurate headings and subheadings.	Short-term

Employment		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
27. Improve staff competency related to accessibility and disability.	27.1 Establish accessibility and disability inclusion training as mandatory for managers, directors, and executive directors.	Mid-term

Employment		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
	27.2 Integrate disability awareness training into the onboarding process for all new hires.	Short-term
28. Increase recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities and older adults.	28.1 Building on the DEI Strategic Plan, continue to develop and implement an inclusive hiring strategy that addresses accessibility barriers related to recruitment (including the accessibility of job postings and ability to apply) and also supports the entire onboarding and promotion cycle of an employee with a disability. Best practice: An additional more detailed review specific to accessibility is possible with appropriate consultant budget at a cost of approximately $12,500 - $20,000	Mid-term
	28.2 Review the application process and implement strategies to improve the accessibility of applying for jobs. 28.2.1 Create an accessibility and accommodation statement. 28.2.2 Continue to deepen and strengthen the human resource team's community partnerships with key partners supporting job seekers with disabilities. 28.2.3 Review new job postings to ensure that they are reflective of the true work requirements such as the need for a driver's license or being able to lift a minimum weight requirement.	Short-term

Employment		
Recommendation	**Action**	**Timeline**
29. Improve provision of workplace accommodations.	29.1 Explore opportunities to remove barriers for flexible work and collaborate with unions as needed.	Short-term
	29.2 Continue to support and communicate a disability case management program (including accommodation processes), informed by disability service organizations and City staff who have disabilities.	Ongoing
	29.3 Uphold workplace accommodation policy for recruitment, onboarding, and retention of new and existing employees with best practices in terms of accessibility and disability inclusion.	Short-term

1 Introduction

The City of Kelowna is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible community for all residents and visitors. In alignment with the Accessible British Columbia Act, this Accessibility Plan identifies, removes, and prevents barriers that hinder the full participation of individuals with disabilities in our community. The goal of this plan is to ensure equal access to public spaces, programs, and services for all community members. The plan reflects Kelowna's dedication to meaningful accessibility improvements, guided by the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.

This plan outlines clear goals for accessibility and actionable steps to achieve them. The consulting team was hired by the City to develop the plan in consultation with City staff and the community. The report provides insights from community engagement, sharing what was learned, top priorities, and barriers to accessibility in areas such as the built environment, transportation, programs and services, and employment. Finally, the appendices provide a glossary of terms that ensures clarity and consistency in understanding accessibility-related concepts.

This plan serves as a framework for transforming Kelowna into a truly accessible and inclusive city, where everyone can fully participate and thrive.

2 What is an accessibility plan?

The Government of British Columbia defines accessibility as follows:

> "Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. Accessibility is important for everyone, especially people with disabilities. Accessibility is about removing barriers and increasing inclusion and independence for everyone."[2]

Accessibility plans establish steps for municipalities to identify, address, and prevent barriers to participation in civic life. This includes considerations for the built environment, facilities, transportation, inclusive programming and customer service, information and communication, employment, and more.

This plan focuses on several key areas:

- **General accessibility:** Accessibility around emergency preparedness, attitudinal changes, and freedom to access in public and private spaces.

- **Built environment:** Accessibility in City-owned and -operated facilities, partner organization properties, and other City infrastructure. This includes both physical infrastructure and operating policies/procedures.

- **Transportation:** Accessibility in parking, roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transit, including infrastructure and operating policies/procedures.

- **Programs and services:** Accessibility in recreation, culture, civic services, protective services, and public works.

- **Information and communication:** Accessible service and communication channels for residents, including the City's website, service portals, and meetings.

- **Employment:** Removing barriers for current and future employees at the City.

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[2] Accessibility legislation plain language summary | Accessibility Legislation British Columbia 2021

In parallel, the City of Kelowna is developing the Accessible Transportation Action Plan (ATAP) with Urban Systems and Universal Access Design. The ATAP is a separate but related effort that will focus more in-depth on accessibility considerations in the design, operation, and maintenance of transportation infrastructure.

Why does Kelowna need an Accessibility Plan?

The Accessibility Plan is not just a provincial mandate; it's a crucial step toward unlocking the potential of people with disabilities and enabling them to fully participate in society. In 2017 (the most recent year local census data on people with disabilities is available), 36,350 people aged 15 and older reported at least one disability in Kelowna. Provincially, BC's disability rate rose 3.9% between 2017 and 2022 – to a provincial level of 28.6%. Further, as the population ages, the disability rate increases. By 2022, 22.6% of the population was aged 65 and older and this segment is growing rapidly as more people choose Kelowna as their retirement destination. This plan addresses the real need to create an inclusive society where everyone, regardless of their abilities, can contribute and thrive.

What does an accessible Kelowna look like to you?

We asked this question during focus group sessions and informal community conversations during engagement. Participants' responses are included throughout this report. To help identify them, all quotes use the formatting below. Quotes might have been edited for clarity and/or length.

"Everyone can go where they need without distress or excessive cost."

— Focus group participant
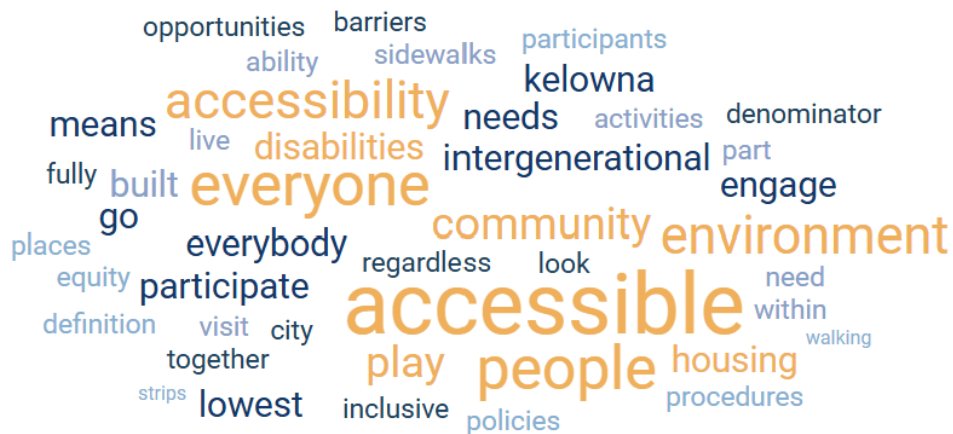
Roles and jurisdiction

Advancing accessibility requires a coordinated effort across all levels of government, as well as collaboration with the private sector, community organizations, and the public.

Federal and provincial government roles

The federal government is responsible for the laws that govern accessibility and the rights of people with disabilities in Canada, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, and the Indian Act. In 2019, the federal government introduced the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). The driving goal of the ACA is to realize a barrier-free Canada by 2040, by establishing a framework for advancing accessibility and mandating the development of accessibility plans for federally regulated entities, among other requirements. Clear standards and guidelines are critical to advance accessibility and ensure consistency and accountability across sectors. The Accessible Canada Standards, developed under the ACA, play an important role in this effort. These standards provide detailed frameworks to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in areas such as employment, communication, transportation, and public spaces. They also emphasize the importance of ongoing public engagement to ensure the standards reflect the lived experiences of people with disabilities.

Provincially, the Accessible British Columbia (ABC) Act Regulation came into effect on September 1, 2022. It requires governments and listed organizations to establish an

accessibility committee and develop an accessibility plan. This plan should outline how the organization will identify, remove, and prevent barriers to people within the organization or those interacting with it. The Province also recently released the newly updated BC Building Codes 2024. Notably, these include new accessibility requirements, including 100% adaptable dwellings in large condominiums and apartments and first-floor dwelling units in new small apartments and condominiums by the year 2027. The updated building code also has new requirements regarding the inclusion of automatic door operators for building entrances and universal washrooms.

City of Kelowna role

At the municipal level, the City of Kelowna has the opportunity to build on its Community for All Ages and Abilities Action Plan, and continue to enhance accessibility. By working closely with people with disabilities, the City can advance accessibility initiatives that respond to the unique needs of local community members and residents. To guide actions, the plan has been organized into the following five service delivery areas:

- **Built environment:** This includes City parks and open spaces, sidewalks and roads, and City facilities, including City Hall (new builds and retrofit, City and external).

- **Transportation:** This includes City sidewalks, parking (on streets and City-owned parking lots), snow removal at these locations and City facilities.

- **Programs and services**: This includes programs and services offered at the City's parks, recreation, and cultural facilities.

- **Information and communication:** This includes printed, digital, and in-person communication, closed captioning, interpreters, alternative methods of communication, accessible websites and PDFs.

- **Employment:** This includes ease of access to City hiring processes, and types of accessibility support provided throughout the hiring process.

Aligned policies

The City of Kelowna identifies the importance of accessibility in several community plans and guiding policies:

- **Transportation Accessibility Strategy:** This Strategy will dive deeper into the accessibility of Kelowna's transportation infrastructure, focusing on identifying, addressing, and removing accessibility barriers in the design, operation, and maintenance of City of Kelowna transportation infrastructure and services.

- **Healthy City Strategy:** This strategy encourages collaborative decision-making with the Interior Health Authority. Together, they aim to develop a long-term, comprehensive plan focused on creating healthy environments and enhancing community health. The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life for all Kelowna residents.

    - **Community for All Ages & Abilities Action Plan:** As part of the Healthy City Strategy, this plan identifies opportunities to adapt policies, plans, and programs to respond to the evolving needs of the community. It outlines a vision for a city that is healthy, safe, active, and inclusive for seniors, children and people with disabilities. This plan details 31 actions, including the Parks and Buildings Assessment, which outlines the importance of creating public spaces that are accessible and where social connections can happen. After assessing 157 parks and 76 buildings, the report recommends updating playground accessibility, passenger loading zones, pathways to amenities, assistive listening systems, recreational facilities, and signage and wayfinding.

    - **Healthy Housing Strategy:** Also part of the Healthy City Strategy, this document identifies actions for housing directions, including research on adaptable housing.

- **Parks Master Plan:** This plan guides the expansion, development, and operations of the City's parks system as Kelowna grows. Equity is a guiding principle for this plan, which aims to design inclusive parks for the safety and enjoyment of everyone, including people with disabilities.
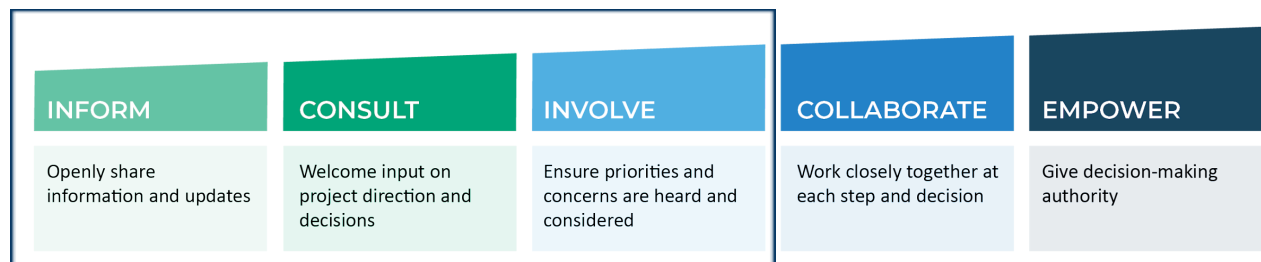
- **City of Kelowna Official Community Plan (OCP) Update:** This plan shapes future growth in the City of Kelowna. Throughout the OCP, the City recognizes the importance of inclusion and accessibility for all, including in:

    - Chapter 9: Equitable Community focuses on creating an equitable community where everyone, including people with disabilities, has access to City resources and services.

    - Chapter 4: the Urban Centres further states: "[Prioritize] accessibility retrofits in Urban Centres for existing facilities."

    - Chapter 5: the Core Area states: "Design civic facilities, public spaces, streetscapes, infrastructure, programs and services that are accessible, available and inclusive of all ages, incomes and abilities, including seniors, people with diverse abilities, Indigenous people, and newcomers."

See Appendix B for the Environmental Scan, outlining Kelowna's existing policy context.

3 Community engagement

What we did

The consulting team developed an engagement and communications plan to gather and hear input from a wide variety of community members and organizations, including people with disabilities, older adults, advocates, community organizations, City staff, and more. The project aligns with the inform, consult, and involve levels of engagement on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of participation, shown below.

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Openly share information and updates	Welcome input on project direction and decisions	Ensure priorities and concerns are heard and considered	Work closely together at each step and decision	Give decision-making authority

Environmental scan: Before beginning community engagement, we conducted an environmental scan to review existing data, statistics, plans, and policy—including provincial legislation—and assess the local context and the City's efforts to date in supporting accessibility in Kelowna.

Key actor scoping: We then developed a comprehensive list of key stakeholders for this project, including residents living with disabilities, older adults, caregivers, and organizations that support or advocate for these groups.

Engagement activities: To inform this plan, we offered a wide variety of online and in-person ways for the community to participate, give input, and share their experiences with accessibility in Kelowna. The City shared information about the project and opportunities to participate through a wide range of platforms and communications channels, including through:

- Project web page, Get Involved Kelowna page
- Print posters with QR codes to the City Webpage
- Social media

- Targeted email outreach and e-newsletters through the City of Kelowna's website
- News media, through Kelowna Capital News and AM 1150
- In-person conversations in the community

Engagement activities included:

- **Surveys:** A plain language and tabbable survey, offered both online and in paper format at City Hall and other locations.

- **Focus groups:** Two in-person facilitated sessions to hear from residents. Attendees were offered honoraria for their participation.

- **Community pop-up events:** Five pop-up engagement events were held in Kelowna at visible locations in the community and alongside public events or a strategic location that is well—frequented by members of the disability community.

    - Equitable outreach: We conducted in-person engagement at Trailside, a temporary housing project for seniors and people with disabilities transitioning out of homelessness, as well as engagement at Pathways Abilities Society, which supports seniors and people with cognitive disabilities. We also located our pop-ups at locations and events where a range of community members were present.

- **One-on-one engagement:** Follow-up conversations with key stakeholders who expressed interest during the focus groups.

- **Community conversations:** Meaningful Access Consulting, also conducted site visits and informal outreach, gathering first-hand observations on Kelowna's accessibility features and receiving direct feedback from community members.

Who we heard from: Through these engagement activities, we reached a broad spectrum of Kelowna residents, organizations, and caregivers, including:

- 3,700 views of the project web page

- 2,200 impressions from the City's Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram posts

- 270 survey responses

- 150 pop-up attendees

- 90+ reached through emails and e-newsletters

- 16 focus group participants

What we learned

Overview

A wide range of people in Kelowna provided input on accessibility barriers, challenges, and areas for improvement. The following section outlines what we heard through the various engagement activities.

Participants shared diverse needs and experiences:

- **Diverse accessibility needs:** Within the survey the most common disability experiences included mobility disabilities, chronic illnesses, and age-related health issues, with respondents often advocating or caring for individuals with various disabilities.

- **Mobility support:** Survey respondents indicated high use of mobility aids, such as manual wheelchairs (27%), walkers (23%), and canes (20%), underscoring the diversity in mobility requirements.

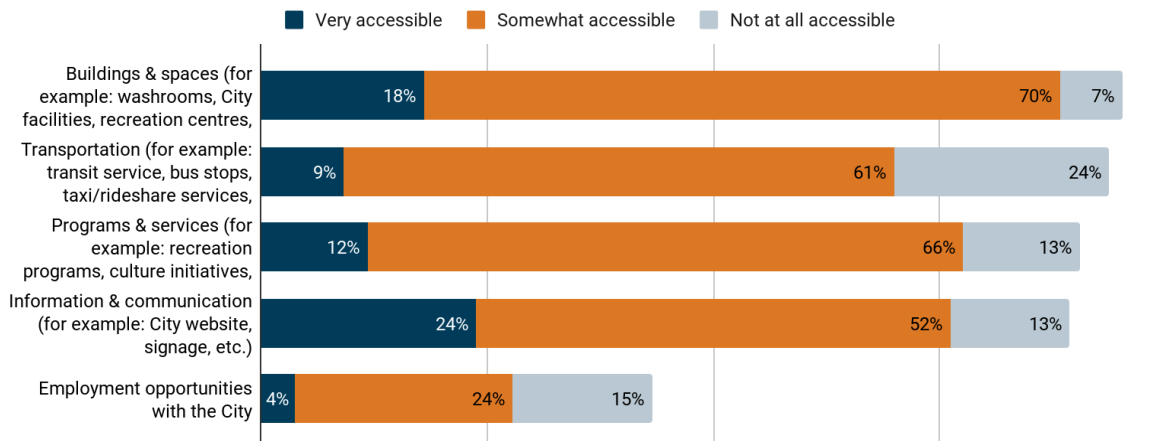Community feedback about barriers to accessibility is categorized into the following themes:

- **General accessibility concerns:** Emergency preparedness, attitudinal changes, intergenerational spaces and play.

- **Built environment:** Public infrastructure enhancements, standardized building and housing features.

- **Transportation:** Better sidewalks and connectivity, snow removal, accessible public transportation and service hours.

- **Programs and services**: Cost barriers, inaccessible City programs, need for intergenerational activities and sensory-friendly areas.

- **Information and communication**: Offering both digital and non-digital communication methods, difficulty navigating City resources, need for improved accessibility channels and feedback.

- **Employment:** Members of the disability community offer an untapped and underutilized resource who can support decision making and awareness training for staff.

- **Immediate actions:** Emergency preparedness in buildings, including a dedicated team responsible for ensuring accountability in improving accessibility and addressing public safety concerns with respect to accessibility and seasonality.

- **Most impactful:** Clear and actionable timelines and commitments paired with coordination and accountability.
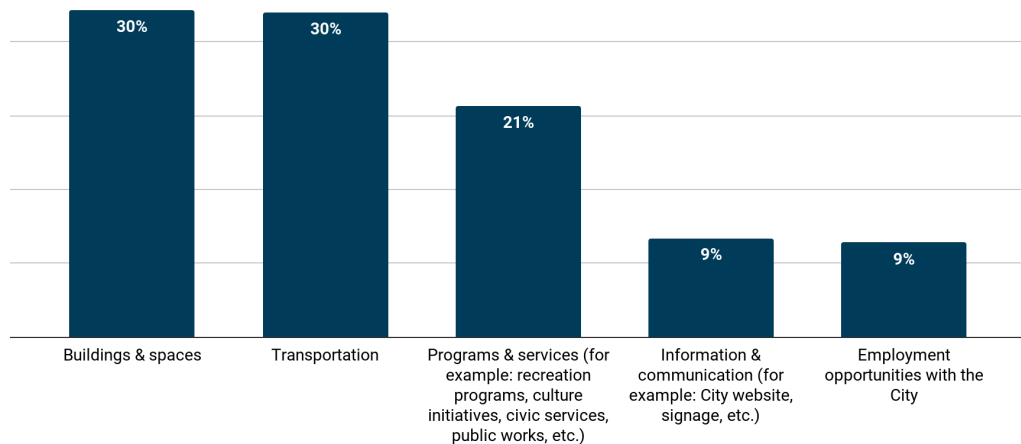
Rating of current accessibility in Kelowna

In the survey, participants were asked how accessible the following services, programs, and infrastructure provided by the City of Kelowna are. Survey respondents indicated that the top three kinds of "very accessible" areas in Kelowna are information and communication (24%), buildings and spaces (18%), and programs and services (12%).

Very accessible | **Somewhat accessible** | **Not at all accessible**

	Very accessible	Somewhat accessible	Not at all accessible
Buildings & spaces (for example: washrooms, City facilities, recreation centres,	18%	70%	7%
Transportation (for example: transit service, bus stops, taxi/rideshare services,	9%	61%	24%
Programs & services (for example: recreation programs, culture initiatives,	12%	66%	13%
Information & communication (for example: City website, signage, etc.)	24%	52%	13%
Employment opportunities with the City	4%	24%	15%

Top priorities in improving accessibility

In the survey, participants were asked what areas were their top priorities for improving accessibility in Kelowna. Building spaces, transportation, and programs and services were the three most commonly selected choices.

Buildings & spaces	Transportation	Programs & services (for example: recreation programs, culture initiatives, civic services, public works, etc.)	Information & communication (for example: City website, signage, etc.)	Employment opportunities with the City
30%	30%	21%	9%	9%

General accessibility

Participants shared that to enhance accessibility and inclusivity, the City should focus on attitudinal changes by providing disability awareness training to staff, to reduce stigma, improve interactions, and minimize explanation fatigue for people with disabilities. Immediate steps should include impactful accessibility planning, such as prioritizing barrier removals by addressing physical obstacles like pedestrian buttons and sidewalk issues. Emergency preparedness must also be improved by ensuring visible fire alarms and accessible emergency plans in public buildings. Regular maintenance—including snow clearing, tree trimming, and sidewalk repairs—is essential to maintain accessibility year round, especially during winter.

The City should establish clear timelines and accountability by setting actionable goals and forming a dedicated team for the Accessibility Plan. Accessible route mapping and maintenance across the City should be prioritized, while transit and traffic regulations need updates, such as expanding handyDART services, enforcing bike path speed limits, and banning e-bikes on sidewalks for safety. High-level engagement is crucial, ensuring the Accessibility Plan reaches decision makers like Council. Additionally, accessibility should be integrated into departmental budgets and the City's financial planning process to ensure sustained and effective implementation.

Accessibility means…

*"Representation of people with disabilities in decision making."*

— Focus group participant

Built environment

Barriers

The survey highlighted barriers in the built environment, particularly in public spaces like sidewalks (68%), parks (56%), and road signals/wayfinding (43%). Issues also extend to recreation facilities (34%) and City buildings (21%). Discussions revealed physical barriers like narrow pathways, inaccessible parks/playgrounds, safety concerns from theft and poor maintenance, and issues with uneven sidewalks, crosswalk accessibility, and snow removal. Parking challenges include insufficient accessible spots, unclear signage, and obstructions like scooters or dining patios. These barriers are most significant in outdoor public spaces and infrastructure.
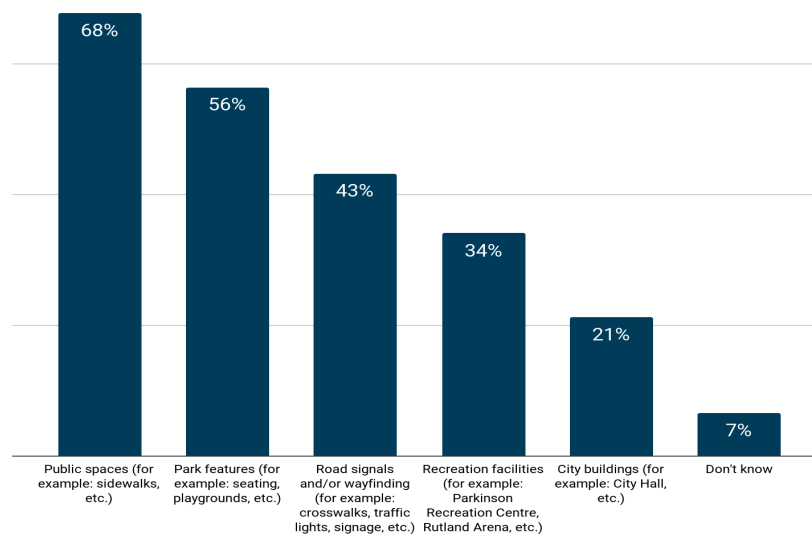
More specifically in the focus groups and community conversations, people shared the following themes around barriers in the built environment:

- **Physical barriers**: Accessibility issues in public facilities—such as narrow doorways, steep pathways, and lack of knee clearance under tables—hinder mobility device users. Parks, playgrounds, and washrooms are often inaccessible, with some lacking automatic doors or adult-sized changing tables. The absence of accessible features in playgrounds has led families to travel to other areas to find suitable spaces.

- **Safety and maintenance**: Safety concerns in downtown areas include stolen

mobility aids and obstacles from street-involved individuals. Poor bike path maintenance creates hazardous conditions, and infrequent snow clearing in winter obstructs pathways, particularly for individuals with disabilities.

- **Sidewalks and crosswalks**: Sidewalks often have uneven surfaces, potholes, and are narrow, making them difficult to navigate, especially for those with mobility aids. Construction closures and obstacles force people to take unsafe detours. Crosswalks have insufficient timing, and pedestrian sensors are not always accessible or set at wheelchair-friendly heights.

- **Snow clearing**: Snow and ice removal is inconsistent, especially downtown and around accessible parking spots. This creates accessibility challenges during winter and often makes sidewalks and paths unusable.

- **Parking**: Accessible parking is insufficient, with limited van-accessible stalls and unclear or inadequate signage. Obstacles, such as Lime scooters, often block these spaces, and some accessible parking is reduced due to outdoor dining patio expansions.

"Kelowna Community Theatre has only wheelchair seating in the top part of the building. When it's sold out, there is nothing available anywhere else in the theatre. Also a family of more able-bodied people can never sit beside or around the wheelchair user."

— Survey respondent

"Many wheelchair access doors require strange physical dexterity just to press the button, then re-adjust and get through the door before it closes. Many doors have partitions that block vision from people at chair height. Many concrete ramps are narrow and have no space for an up and a down."

— Survey respondent

Priorities

Priorities for improvements in the built environment include:

Accessible playgrounds and parks

- **Missing, removed, or broken features:** Accessible swings have been removed from or damaged in playgrounds, resulting in fewer options for the community.

- **Maintenance**: Maintenance for features such as Mobi-Mats is important, otherwise they do not provide accessibility.

- **Lack of accessible playgrounds**: Community members go to West Kelowna's accessible playground to meet their needs rather than staying in their own community.

- **Autism and communication systems**: There are no visual communications systems in playgrounds for children who are non-verbal.

- **Awareness of accessibility features**: Information on universal or accessible playgrounds is inconsistent and incorrect, meaning that people are not aware of the features available to them.

- **Strathcona Beach playground**: The playground, located across the street from the hospital, features signage on how the playground is inclusive and accessible;

however, it lacks accessible features such as picnic tables, benches and playground equipment that would entertain a child with a disability.

- **Inconsistent accessibility**: Playgrounds and parks do not offer an 'accessible hub' of features. There are accessible elements at a variety of playgrounds and parks but none provide a complete accessible experience. For example, City Park has accessible parking and pathways, an accessible washroom, splash pad, and some universal picnic tables, but not an accessible playground or features that a child with a physical disability could enjoy.

- **Benches**: Insufficient quantity and frequency of benches and picnic tables, particularly accessible ones.

- **Accessible playgrounds and parks**: Accessible features in playgrounds and parks are inconsistent. While some parks offer accessible washrooms and pathways, few have accessible playground equipment, leading families to travel outside their community. Lack of accessible hubs with inclusive features for children of all abilities limits recreation options.

> *"Kelowna Community Theatre has accessibility issues, and most city beaches, except Gyro, have significant challenges with accessing the water and sometimes even the park due to narrow, rough, or missing walkways. The dog parks I know of (one near Knox Mountain and two further south past Summerhill on Lakeshore Road) are not wheelchair-friendly. At Parkinson Recreation Centre, the interior ramp is too steep. Why were all the disabled parking spaces removed at H2O? Parking for rear-loading accessible vans also needs more consideration, such as longer stalls."*
>
> *— Survey respondent*

Transportation

Modes of transportation

In the survey, participants were asked what mode of transportation they typically use, The majority of respondents typically drive their vehicle (32%) or walk or wheel (23%).
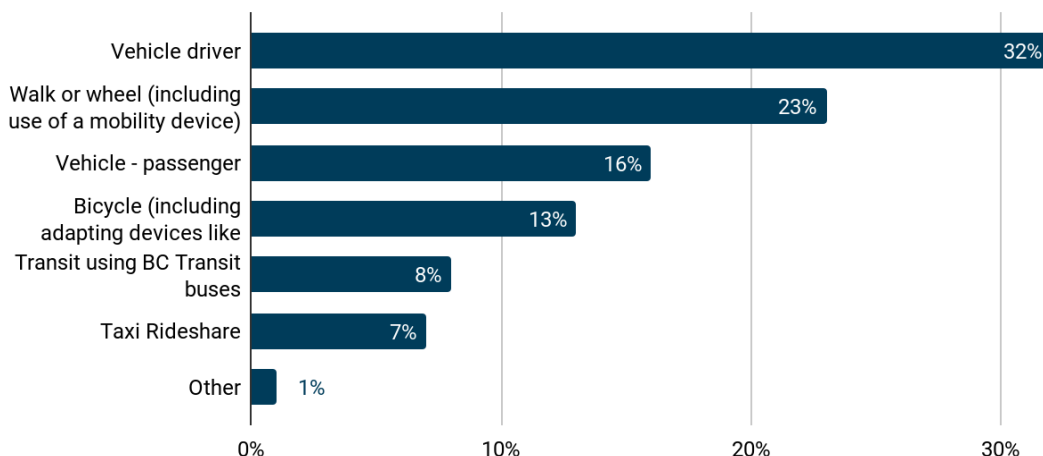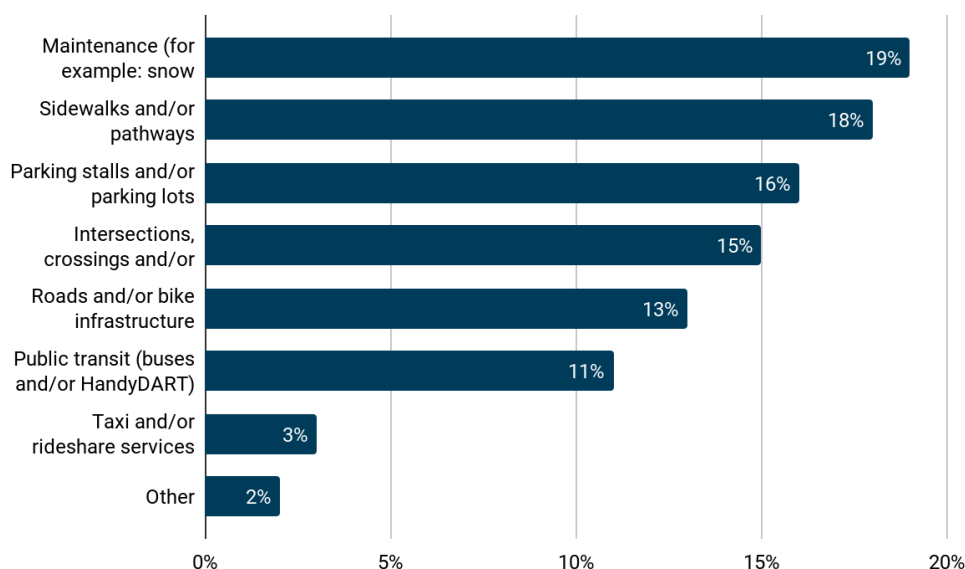

Barriers

Overall, residents expressed several concerns related to public transportation in Kelowna. Many shared that buses are often unreliable and infrequent, especially during evenings and weekends, and accessibility issues make it difficult for some individuals to reach bus stops. Additionally, the handyDART service is frequently unreliable, and a lack of wheelchair-accessible taxis and ridesharing services make it difficult for wheelchair users to get around.

- **Unreliable bus service**: Many find it difficult to rely on public transportation due to long wait times, limited routes, and buses not running on schedule.

- **handyDART challenges**: handyDART is unreliable, difficult to book, and has long wait times with limited service during evenings and weekends.

- **Accessibility barriers**: Bus stops are far from residences, lack seating, and have inadequate covered waiting areas.

- **Snow removal issues**: Poor snow removal at bus stops hinders access for pedestrians.

- **Taxi/rideshare accessibility**: Few wheelchair-accessible taxis and rideshare options are available.

- **Sidewalk connectivity**: Inadequate pedestrian and bike path networks, especially along major corridors, create navigation barriers.

- **Accessible parking**: Parking pay machines and apps are not fully accessible, and there is insufficient accessible parking near public facilities.

- **Crosswalk accessibility**: Crosswalks lack audible tones, flashing lights, and well-placed buttons for people with visual or mobility disabilities.

- **Wayfinding and signage**: Limited accessible signage and poorly placed parking meters create navigation challenges for individuals with disabilities.

In the survey, participants were asked, "when it comes to traveling around Kelowna, where do you face barriers?" Maintenance is the most common barrier faced by respondents (19%), followed by sidewalks and/or pathways (18%) and parking stalls and/or parking lots (16%).

Category	Percentage
Maintenance (for example: snow	19%
Sidewalks and/or pathways	18%
Parking stalls and/or parking lots	16%
Intersections, crossings and/or	15%
Roads and/or bike infrastructure	13%
Public transit (buses and/or HandyDART)	11%
Taxi and/or rideshare services	3%
Other	2%

"The bus system has narrow entrances, making it difficult to attempt to ride the bus"

— Survey respondent

Priorities

To improve public transportation in Kelowna, residents suggested more frequent and reliable bus services, more bus stops, and bus stop amenities. Additionally, there are calls to improve the predictability and timeliness of handyDART schedules, enhance accessibility at bus stops, and provide more wheelchair-accessible taxis and rideshare options.

Public transportation, parking, and wayfinding

- **Bus accessibility:** Add more buses, address crowded rush-hour conditions, and support scooter access to enhance transit accessibility.

- **Island platform bus stops:** Redesign these stops to reduce fall risks and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

- **Parking accessibility:** Ensure accessible parking near medical services, improve pay machines, increase the number of van-accessible stalls, and add stand-up wayfinding signs visible year-round.

- **Pedestrian network:** Increase sidewalks and pathways to improve accessibility, with standardized 1.8-metre widths for ease of mobility.

- **Trail and sidewalk maintenance:** Address drainage issues to reduce ice, remove obstructions, and repair uneven surfaces.

- **Safety enhancements:** Improve traffic safety around schools, add flashing lights for bikes, enhance crosswalk button accessibility, and ensure signals have audible tones.

- **Bike lanes and traffic calming:** Add bike lanes, slow traffic on busy streets like Bernard, and enhance snow/ice removal on sidewalks and bike lanes.

- **Bus frequency and routes**: Increase frequency of buses, especially during evenings and weekends, and add more bus routes to provide greater service across the city.

- **Bus stops and facilities:** More bus stops are desired, along with improved lighting, seating, and shelters at these locations.

- **handyDART service**: Improve the predictability and timeliness of handyDART schedules, as well as the booking process. Additionally, many would like to increase the number of handyDART buses and extend service to weekends and holidays.

- **Accessibility**: Improving the accessibility at bus stops with ramps, shelters, clear signage, tactile information, and louder announcements is a priority. There are calls for better education for bus drivers on assisting people with disabilities and ensuring courteous behavior.

- **Taxis and rideshare services**: There is a need for more wheelchair-accessible taxis and rideshare options, as well as better training for drivers to assist individuals with disabilities.

- **Additional services**: Introduce park and ride bus hubs. Some noted that there should be real-time bus tracking through apps and digital screens at bus stops.

Programs and services

Barriers

Participants highlighted significant barriers to accessing programs and services for people with disabilities. Specific barriers included:

Programs and services

- **Limited program availability**: Few programs exist specifically for people with disabilities, particularly for young adults over the age of 19. High costs and inconvenient schedules often exclude individuals from participating. The limited availability of accessible programs for different age groups creates isolation and limits opportunities for recreation.

- **Recreational spaces**: Individuals with sensory sensitivities avoid many recreational spaces due to a lack of low-sensory hours or dedicated areas with reduced stimuli. Physical barriers in these spaces also prevent full participation.

- **Support services and life skills training**: People with disabilities express a need for support in developing life skills, such as using public transit, which would help with independence. The lack of specialized support programs limits community engagement and personal development.

- **Financial barriers**: Cost is a major obstacle for people with disabilities to access community programs and transportation services. Lower-cost options and subsidized programs would enable more inclusive participation.

- **Inclusive programs**: More sensory-friendly options in public spaces would allow for better intergenerational play and activities. Programs that focus on inclusivity—such as tool libraries, intergenerational programs, and accessible libraries—would enhance engagement for people with diverse needs.

- **Inclusion in decision making**: People with disabilities face limited employment and volunteer opportunities, often due to a lack of workplace accommodations and awareness. There is a strong desire among individuals with disabilities to be included in City decision-making processes with their lived experience providing additional valuable insights on the creation and operation of community spaces.

"By physically fragmenting City services, accessing services becomes much more difficult as issues faced by individual members of the public rarely fit within just one City service area. This creates barriers to service for everyone trying to access City services, not just for those people with mental disabilities or elderly, including being frightening, confusing, and designed so that individuals give up. [We need] single points of access for the City that then coordinate all service interaction"

— Survey respondent

Priorities

Programs and services

- **Program access:** Increase accessible programs for people with disabilities, especially young adults over 19, and reduce sensory barriers in recreational spaces.

- **Disability awareness training:** Train City staff to reduce stigma, improve interaction, and minimize explanation fatigue for people with disabilities.

- **Employment and volunteering**: Improve awareness of job and volunteer opportunities and provide necessary accommodations in City roles.

- **Lack of awareness**: Increase awareness of programs and accommodations available that would support individuals with disabilities.

- **Low sensory options**: Develop opportunities to offer low-sensory programs and spaces for individuals who need reduced stimulation times, particularly in noisy environments.

- **Sense of inclusion**: Parents with children who have more complex needs or behaviors expressed a desire for more awareness of what training is provided to staff, particularly in the library so they know their child will be welcomed and understood.

Information and communication

Barriers

In the survey, the community shared widespread accessibility issues that cause frustration for residents, particularly those in crisis. Problems include frequent call transfers, unclear contact information, lack of plain language, and delayed or inaccessible updates on events like road closures. Reliance on digital platforms exacerbates challenges for people with disabilities or limited internet access, as the City's website is difficult to navigate and lacks screen reader compatibility and user-friendly tools. Non-uniform communication across departments, automated systems, and the absence of printed resources, such as recreation guides, further hinder access. The findings highlight the need for improved digital tools, accessible public bulletin boards, ASL interpreters, and clear, consistent communication.

Specific barriers included:

- **Website accessibility**: City websites are typically text-heavy, making navigation difficult for individuals with visual or cognitive disabilities. The lack of visuals, alternative text, and accessible search features complicates access to important information.

- **Printed materials and interactive maps**: There is a need for more printed materials to assist individuals who prefer or rely on non-digital navigation aids.

Developing interactive maps could show live accessible routes, parks, and facilities making the community in real-time more accessible and inclusive.

- **Emergency preparedness**: Individuals with disabilities were especially vulnerable during recent emergencies due to limited ASL and closed-captioning services. People with hearing disabilities had difficulty receiving critical updates during situations such as wildfires, highlighting the need for more accessible emergency notifications.

- **City feedback channels**: The City's efforts to improve accessibility are not always visible, and there is limited opportunity for feedback from the disability community. Enhancing communication channels for receiving accessibility-related input would ensure the City's efforts are aligned with community needs.

"Electronic answering machines with multiple levels and choices are hard to navigate or get accountability on."

— Survey respondent

"I love the City of Kelowna website. I love receiving email updates, such as the one I'm responding to now. However, my neighbor is 85 and doesn't do computers. How do we help reach those individuals? Mail outs? TV? Radio? Newspaper?"

— Survey respondent

"One of the main barriers is navigating the complexity of finding the right department or contact person for specific issues. It can be challenging to determine who to reach out to for different services or concerns, which sometimes leads to delays in getting the necessary information."

— Survey respondent

Priorities

Information and communication

- **Website and print accessibility:** Enhance City website usability with visual aids, alternative text, and accessible search features. Provide accessible printed materials for wayfinding and navigation.

- **Disability awareness training:** Provide City staff with comprehensive training focused on reducing stigma, enhancing communication, and minimizing explanation fatigue when interacting with people with disabilities, ensuring accessibility is prioritized in all communications activities.

- **Maintenance and communication systems**: Create visual communication systems in playgrounds, this is an essential feature for non-verbal children and those on the autism spectrum. This absence impacts families who need visual aids.
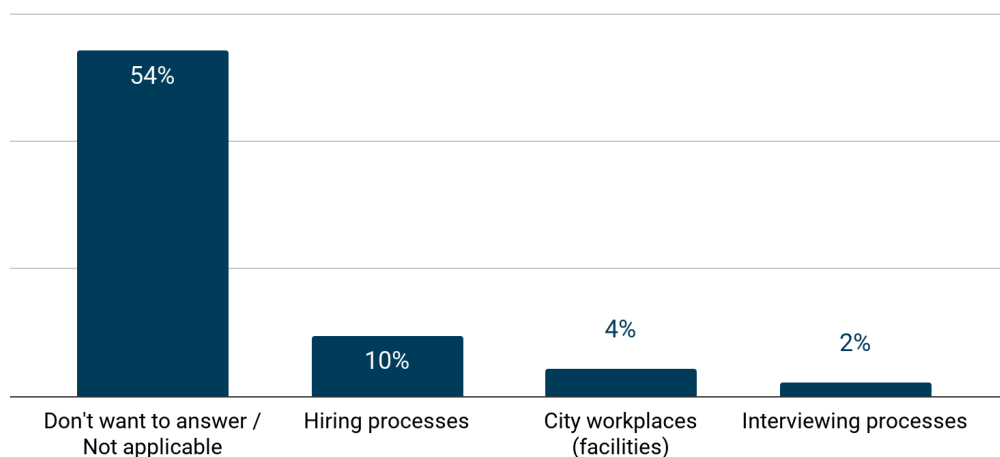
Accessibility means...

> *"Everybody belongs and should participate in society, including intergenerational play."*
>
> *— Focus group participant*

Employment

Barriers

The survey asked participants about barriers they face with employment with the City of Kelowna. Over half (54%) indicated they preferred not to answer or the question was not applicable to them, while 9% indicated barriers with the hiring processes at the City of Kelowna. Another 4% selected City workplaces, such as facilities, as being a barrier to employment, and 2% reported barriers with the interview process. Participants shared that employers frequently lack awareness about accommodations for people with disabilities, which restricts employment and volunteer opportunities. Flexible policies for medical needs and awareness training for staff would make workplaces more accessible. There is also a lack of employment or volunteering options in the City for individuals with disabilities.

Don't want to answer / Not applicable	Hiring processes	City workplaces (facilities)	Interviewing processes
54%	10%	4%	2%

4 Recommendations and actions

The Kelowna Accessibility Plan is designed to be implemented over the next decade, with short-term (2025-2026), mid-term (2027-2029), and long-term (2029 and beyond) actions. This timeline allows for a phased approach to addressing accessibility needs, ensuring that Kelowna addresses the most pressing issues first, while also planning for future improvements. It ensures that the City can allocate resources effectively and make steady progress towards creating a more inclusive and accessible community.

The recommendations and actions detailed in this Plan have not undergone detailed costing. The proposed implementation timeline reflects the high-level cost and complexity of the recommendations and actions. It serves as a guide to inform accessibility improvement priorities over the next decade.

This report acknowledges that while most recommendations have not been costed, their adoption should be managed within existing budgets and resources over time. The proposed time frame will guide budget allocations and prioritization to ensure effective implementation.

General

Sustained accountability requires a designated staff lead, along with regular reporting and updates to the Accessibility Plan. Accessibility must be integrated into financial planning, with funds allocated for inclusive design and supported by an in-house advisory committee. Engagement with people with disabilities and older adults should include consistent input and compensation for lived expertise. Emergency preparedness plans must address accessibility through multi-channel communication, mobility aids, and visual alarms. Partnerships with Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR) and the climate action team can improve evacuation and air quality strategies. Early actions and clear communication will strengthen trust and commitment to inclusivity.

Goal: Embed accessibility and universal design into City operations, planning, and emergency preparedness to foster accountability and inclusivity across all sectors.

Recommendations and actions:

1. **Ensure ongoing engagement and accountability throughout the implementation of this Plan.**

   1.1. Develop a process to report every year on the City's progress in implementing the Accessibility Plan, and to review and update the Plan every three years. | Short-term |

   1.2. Designate a responsible staff person or department to oversee and implement the Accessibility Plan.

   > Best practice: Ideally, this person should have lived personal or professional experience with disability or with the barriers faced by members of the disability community. | Short-term |

2. **Define corporate language for accessibility creating clear guidelines on how the City should communicate about and implement accessibility measures, ensuring consistent terminology and practices across all departments.**

   2.1. Define a City-wide approach to accessibility and universal design best practice integration across all departments. | Mid-term |

3. **Establish a consistent approach to engagement with people with disabilities.**

   3.1. Recognize the financial burdens that many people with disabilities face and provide remuneration for the lived-experience expertise requested of people with disabilities in municipal engagement, where appropriate.

   Best practice: Opt-in financial compensation for people with disabilities is also recommended for in-depth engagement (such as focus groups or interviews). Should this not be financially feasible, offering municipal Parks & Recreation passes (monthly, family, or 10-pack) are a lower cost alternative that reflects the value of participation and provides a real and direct benefit to participants.

   Additional information: Compensating people with disabilities, for their participation in engagement enables greater participation among these communities. This reflects recognition of the value of their lived experience and is a small step to addressing socioeconomic disparity in our communities.

Nationally, 23 per cent of people with disabilities classify as low income, compared to only nine percent of the general population.

This was underlined in our engagement, where during a focus group, where a participant noted the $80.42 for a six month Combination Pass was, a "steep" price. Even though the pass is of great value it demonstrates the financial burdens that people with disabilities face, when living on disability support funding.

3.2. Together with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, identify how people with disabilities should be engaged in policy and decision-making processes.

3.3. Ensure that the City's engagement process is inclusive and accessible to those with disabilities.

4. **Ensure that accessibility is integrated into the financial planning process for the City.**

4.1. Ensure sufficient funding is allocated in all relevant operating and capital budgets to implement accessible and universal design features from the outset of all projects, infrastructure and facility design plans. | Short-term |

> Best practice: This should include projects related to digital infrastructure, transportation, training, and policy development - not just built environment.

> Best practice: Develop a process to provide oversight and guidance on how accessibility measures are budgeted for, this increases the likelihood that it receives adequate consideration when budgeting for larger projects and initiatives.

5. **Conduct an accessibility review of emergency preparedness plans.**

5.1. Develop a multi-channel emergency communications and response strategy for all City facilities that integrates the needs of individuals using mobility devices (such as using evacuation chairs in multi-storey buildings) and those who are Deaf or hard of hearing (such as integrating visual alarms or other visual communications).. | Mid-term |

5.2. Work with the Regional Emergency Management Program to increase accessibility and accessibility-related information for evacuees City facilities use for reception and lodging centres. Mid-term |

    5.2.1. Work with the climate action team to coordinate strategies with buildings and infrastructure development teams.

    5.2.2. Consider offering the public ways to access fresh and purified air during forest fire events and high smoke. | Mid-term |

5.3. For large-scale emergencies, develop an evacuation plan that considers the needs of those with disabilities communication and access needs. | Mid-term |

5.4. Support the Regional Emergency Management Program's development of a community support plan which will create community connections with local social service and support agencies for those with disabilities to build preparedness and emergency response. | Mid-term |

5.5. Advocate to EMCR for increased accessibility resources and requirements for evacuees with disabilities. | Mid-term |

6.   Increase community awareness and appreciation for people with disabilities

6.1. Explore the potential of adding an Accessible Award category within the Civic & Community Awards to recognize businesses or organizations making strides to improve the lives for people with disabilities.. | Short-term |

Accessible emergency preparedness is important because...

"Deaf and blind communities face higher risks due to lack of emergency communication tools like visual fire alarms."

— Focus group participant

Built environment

The built environment directly impacts how people with disabilities can engage with their community. From public buildings and parks to streets and sidewalks, the built environment must be designed with the intention to welcome people of all ages and abilities. Accessible built environments go beyond minimum code requirements to create meaningful experiences for all users. Key considerations include clear paths of travel, wayfinding supports, accessible furnishings and equipment, and sensory-friendly design. The City of Kelowna can strengthen belonging and inclusion for community members of all ages and abilities by prioritizing accessibility in the built environment.

Goal: Create an accessible and inclusive built environment that enables all community members to navigate and use public spaces with ease.

Built environment: Building blocks

- Kelowna's OCP includes clear direction for making City infrastructure more accessible.

- Kelowna achieved age-friendly community recognition from the B.C. Ministry of Health for the Community for All Plan.

- There are accessible features in parks and playgrounds, most prominently at Strathcona Beach Park.

- The Accessible Measures for Hotels & Motels bylaw ensures a degree of accessibility for visitors.

An accessible public realm means...

"Spaces should support engagement across all ages, allowing people of all generations to interact and play together."

— Focus group participant

7. **Ensure accessibility and universal design principles are included during the planning process for new City facilities and amenities.**

   7.1. Develop policy and adopt design standards for all new or renovated City facilities and pathways on facility properties, adhering to industry best practices (such as the RHF Accessibility Certified Gold, or CSA B651-23).| Short-term |

   7.2. Within RFP procurement, specifically within social value evaluation, include criteria that encourage proponents to account for accessibility. | Short-term |

8. **Improve accessibility of City facilities through audits, upgrades and phased implementation.**

   8.1. Enable staff in key roles to pursue Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) as professional development and internal capacity building. | Short-term |

   8.2. Perform accessibility audits of all public-facing City facilities that have yet to be audited, identifying all accessibility barriers. (physical, vision, hearing, sensory, etc.) | Mid-term |

      8.2.1. Establish annual targets to ensure that all remaining audits are completed within five years.

      8.2.2. Once new audits are complete, have the RHFAC-certified staff member

assess whether 2017 audits are sufficient to establish priority enhancements. If yes, proceed to prioritization. If not, re-audit facilities that were part of the 2017 initiative.

Best practice: Accessibility standards change over time. To maintain best practices, audit all public buildings every ten years.

8.3. Develop a prioritization framework for accessibility improvements based on factors such as facility usage, public feedback, compliance with accessibility standards, and overall impact on community inclusion. | Mid-term |

8.4. Create a phased implementation plan to address priority recommendations identified in accessibility audits, detailing timelines, responsibilities, and funding sources. | Mid-term |

9. Improve accessibility of City parks and playgrounds.

9.1. Determine opportunities to enhance accessibility in parks and prioritize accessibility in parks across the community. Where parks are already very accessible, add amenities that can create community hubs of accessibility (such as creating pathways to universally designed picnic tables or adding additional equipment). | Short-term |

9.2. Review opportunities to include playspaces that meet various sensory needs, such as rest stations and quiet spaces. | Short-term |

9.3. Develop and implement a strategy that prioritizes existing parks to retrofit to improve accessibility based on the outcomes of the parks' condition assessment. | Mid-term |

9.4. Develop and implement regular maintenance policies for accessibility features, such as Mobi-Mats, ensuring that they are functional and used for their intended purpose. | Mid-term |

9.5. Include picnic tables and benches in the equipment replacement cycle to be universally designed. | Short-term |

9.6. Create complete paths of accessibility by ensuring that accessible features are along a path of travel that connects with accessible parking stalls. | Short-term |

9.7. Develop and adopt accessible landscape design standards for parks, playgrounds, and open spaces. The design standards should include site furnishings (such as layout and placement, universally designed models), accessible route layout and construction, a wayfinding strategy, shade requirements, and integrate the accessible playgrounds standards once completed. | Mid-term |

> Best practice: The design standards should include site furnishings (such as layout and placement, universally designed models), accessible route layout and construction, a wayfinding strategy, shade requirements, and integrate the accessible playgrounds standards once completed.

> Additional information: These may be 'made-in-Kelowna' standards, tailored to the specific context, as is the case in Richmond, Vancouver, Surrey, and elsewhere. They may also be drawn from existing standards in communities such as those listed above, or from standardized templates, such as the Accessibility Standards Canada Outdoor Spaces guidelines, Playworld's accessible playground guide, the Trans Canada Trail and/or the American Trails Park and Trail Accessibility Design Guidelines.

10.   Review the City's washrooms from an accessibility lens while incorporating opening hours and access to public washrooms.

10.1. Identify and prioritize public washrooms in need of accessibility upgrades and safety improvements. | Short-term |

10.2. Implement accessibility upgrades to washrooms prioritized in the action above. | Mid-term |

11.   Develop a plan to increase accessibility to the lake, ensuring that everyone can access outdoor recreation opportunities.

11.1. Explore opportunities for partnerships with local organizations that provide outdoor adaptive recreational services in Kelowna. | Short-term |

11.2. Consider opportunities to provide complete access to the beach for people using wheelchairs or mobility devices, such as through boardwalks or temporary

pathways (e.g. Mobi-Mats). | Mid-term |

11.3. Consider installing accessible kayak or canoe boat launch infrastructure
| Short-term |

12.   Increase access to adaptable and accessible housing.

12.1. When implemented, review the new BC Building Code requirements for adaptable housing units and seek ways to increase the supply of adaptable housing. | Short-term |

12.2. Develop a standard and minimum unit percentage for including accessible housing in large developments. | Mid-term |

> Best practice: Prepare for the upcoming changes in the BC Building Code (2027 implementation of adaptable housing standards) to position yourself as leaders in accessible unit implementation.

Transportation

Accessible transportation networks connect people with disabilities to all aspects of community life. Sidewalks, roads, public transit, and parking must form an integrated system that enables safe, barrier-free mobility for all. Accessible transportation planning involves close consultation with people with disabilities to identify and address barriers at every stage of the journey. Details like accessible bus stops, audible pedestrian signals, and tactile warning surfaces make a tangible difference in how people can navigate their environment. By providing reliable, accessible transportation options, Kelowna can ensure that no one is left behind and that our community is open to all.

Goal: Develop a transportation network that prioritizes accessibility, safety, and ease of use for all community members.

Transportation: Building blocks

- Kelowna has a list of pedestrian and accessibility-related improvements that are needed and is gradually addressing them.
- The City clears snow and ice from key areas (including bus stops and school areas) within 24 hours.
- Kelowna has handyDART service, operated by BC Transit.
- The City assesses sidewalk quality and needs for maintenance annually.

The transportation recommendations are linked to the Transportation Accessibility Strategy, which is currently under development. The Kelowna Accessibility Plan includes transportation recommendations, in line with the Strategy.

Recommendations and actions:

13.   Develop a Transportation Accessibility Strategy

13.1. Develop an Accessible Transportation Strategy focused on transportation infrastructure design guidelines and operations and maintenance practices. Ensure it follows best practices in accessibility and universal design. This action is also identified in the 2040 Transportation Master Plan and will incorporate community feedback gained from the Accessibility Plan. | Short-term |

14.   Complete an Accessible Parking Program Review to increase the overall availability of accessible parking stalls in Kelowna

14.1. Ensure both existing and new City facilities have an adequate number of off-street accessible parking spaces to meet or exceed minimums outlined in Zoning Bylaw 12375 | Short-term |

14.2. Ensure key pedestrian destinations, parks, and business districts have adequate availability of short-term on-street accessible parking spaces | Mid-term |

14.3. Develop a standard design for on-street accessible parking stalls with accessible curb ramps. | Short-term |

14.4. Improve controls and enforcement to ensure the proper use of City-owned accessible parking stalls. | Long-term |

15.   Improve public transit and handyDART accessibility

15.1 Continue to work with BC Transit to identify opportunities to increase transit service frequency, including off-peak, evening, and weekend transit service. | Ongoing |

15.2 As bus stops are upgraded, ensure BC Transit's accessibility design guidelines are considered and implemented where possible. | Ongoing |

15.3 Advocate and support BC transit to improve handyDART service (e.g. booking process and extending handyDART services on Sundays and holidays). | Short-term |

15.4 Review opportunities to enhance access to alternative transportation options

at bus exchanges when conducting capital upgrades. | Long-term |

16. Improve accessibility of sidewalks and pathways

16.1 When updating the Transportation Master Plan list of recommended active transportation projects in the future, consider gaps in the sidewalk and pathway network as well as areas of high active transportation activity and key destinations such as schools, parks, community facilities, and commercial areas. | Mid-term |

17. Improve accessibility of intersections and crosswalks

17.1 When upgrading intersections and crosswalks, ensure that appropriate accessibility upgrades are incorporated. Examples could include accessible curb ramps, Tactile Walking Surface Indicators, pedestrian pushbuttons, accessible pedestrian signals, and pedestrian countdown timers. | Mid-term |

17.2 Ensure users needs (including those with limited mobility, who may need more time to cross) are considered when setting crosswalk signal timings. | Mid-term |

18. Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and other users

18.1 Continue to pursue opportunities to educate the public on safe and respectful behaviour for all users including cyclists and micromobility users on multi-use pathways. | Mid-term |

18.2 Continue to explore emerging technologies and solutions to improve safety and accessibility for all users, including people with sight loss, within the road right-of-way and transportation network (e.g. island platform bus stops and shared pathways). | Ongoing |

19. Ensure the transportation network is legible and easy to navigate

19.1 Continue to provide wayfinding on key pedestrian and cyclist corridors and at key destinations. | Ongoing |

Accessible transportation means...

> *"Freedom to travel where needed without stress or safety risk."*
>
> *— Focus group participant*

Programs and services

> **Programs and Services: Building blocks**
>
> - The City offers 35+ adaptive recreation programs and services.
> - The City offers accessibility and inclusion training for front-of-house staff.
> - The Parkinson Recreation Centre redevelopment team includes accessibility consultants.
> - Kelowna offers low-cost accessible passes for recreation.

Programs and services are essential to fostering inclusion and community engagement for individuals with disabilities. To ensure equitable access, these offerings must go beyond addressing basic needs to provide meaningful and supportive experiences for all users. Key priorities include increasing representation of people with disabilities in decision making, collaborating with community organizations, and offering sensory-friendly options, such as low-sensory hours and sensory kits in public spaces. Enhanced staff training in disability awareness and accommodations will ensure better support and flexibility in programs. Additionally, raising awareness among public event organizers and providing accessibility resources can improve inclusivity across community events. By prioritizing accessibility and representation, the City of Kelowna can create programs and services that strengthen belonging and enable participation for individuals of all abilities.

Goal: Develop accessible, inclusive programs and services that enable individuals of all abilities to participate fully in their community.

Recommendations and actions:

20. Determine opportunities to collaborate with key organizations to maximize the impact of public funding.

> 20.1 Create and/or deepen partnerships with private operators—such as Pathways, People in Motion, CNIB, and CRIS Adaptive Adventures—to better coordinate resources and understanding of community needs.| Short-term |

21. In recreation facilities, offer low-sensory/quiet times or spaces for individuals who are neurodivergent or sensitive to sensory stimulation.

> 21.1 Create and execute a plan that offers for sensory-friendly times and spaces in key public spaces and facilities including arts, cultural and recreational facilities as well City-led public events. | Short/Mid-term |
>
> 21.2 Increase sensory accessibility by creating sensory kits and offering them for loan at City facilities. | Short-term |
>> Best practice: Sensory kits generally include items such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, quiet activities, stress balls, etc.

22. Provide education and disability awareness training to City staff.

> 22.1 Continue to offer, and where possible, expand, specific training to staff who deliver programs and services on how to accommodate varying abilities and flexible criteria for program participation, such as swim lessons. | Short-term |
>
> 22.2 Create a resource for best practices and accessibility-related policies and procedures that can be easily found on an internal document-sharing platform. | Short-term |

23. Raise awareness among public event organizers around increasing accessibility at permitted events.

> 23.1 Develop accessibility resources and toolkits for event organizers to improve inclusion at City-permitted events. | Short-term |
>
> 23.2 Require organizers to complete an accessibility checklist or outline an accessibility plan to obtain an event permit. | Short-term |

Information and communication

Information and communication: Building blocks

- The City of Kelowna has a comprehensive website showcasing services, departments, events, and news. It also has a directory with email and phone number for different departments.

- The City is developing a library of resources of accessibility best practices.

Accessible information and communication are critical to ensuring that all community members can engage with and benefit from City services and initiatives. To improve accessibility, the City of Kelowna must enhance its communication strategies, update its digital platforms, and develop clear policies for accessible communication practices. Priorities include creating an accessible communication policy, ensuring key materials are available in both digital and non-digital formats, and hiring specialized staff to advance digital accessibility. Efforts should also focus on mapping and sharing accessible routes and features, updating the City's "Accessibility" webpage, and distributing resources in accessible formats. By adopting best practices—such as providing ASL interpreters, captions, and screen-reader-compatible PDFs—the City can improve inclusivity in meetings, events, and announcements. Additionally, aligning with current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and promoting "good news" stories about accessibility efforts will strengthen public awareness and trust.

Goal: Provide clear, accessible, and inclusive communication across all platforms to ensure equitable access to information and services for all community members.

24. **Improve communication about accessibility features and services.**

   24.1 Develop a strategy to communicate existing accessibility features in City-owned/operated spaces and services to the public. | Mid-term |

   24.1.1 Review and update the City of Kelowna's "Accessibility" webpage. Ensure it is easy to find and provides information and links to adaptive and inclusive programs, information, and services. Resource pages on what to

communicate on an accessible webpage and on individual facility webpages can be found in Appendix B and on hirefortalent.ca and accessibleemployers.ca/.

24.1.2 Create a listing of accessible features in City spaces, programs, and services; make this list available both digitally and in print; and update and distribute it annually.

24.1.3 Map and create an inventory of accessible routes and amenities throughout City facilities; share this resource publicly to increase the use of accessibility features already in place.

25. Improve accessibility of the City of Kelowna's communications.

25.1 Develop an Accessible Communication Policy that outlines the standards of practice and procedures for communications across all City documents, forms, bills, meetings and events across all City departments. | Short-term |

25.2 Develop and implement a plan to increase digital accessibility. | Short-term |

25.3 Develop a policy or set of best practices to support accessibility where important information is disseminated by the City. | Short-term |

> Best practice: Develop a system for ensuring that all key City communications are available in digital and non-digital formats.

25.4 Have a checklist to make sure all PDFs are accessible and compatible with screen readers. | Short-term |

26. Review the website overall for accessibility moving towards meeting the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) best practices.

26.1 Develop interim steps to increase the accessibility of the website including adding or using: ALT-text, plain language, increased photo use and accurate headings and subheadings. | Short-term |

Employment

> **Employment: Building blocks**
>
> ● Kelowna, as an employer, values diversity and is committed to an inclusive, accessible work environment where collaboration, understanding, and mutual respect bring out the best in its staff.

Accessible and inclusive employment opportunities are essential for fostering a diverse workforce and supporting individuals with disabilities and older adults. Key priorities include improving staff competency in accessibility through mandatory training for managers and integrating disability awareness training into onboarding for all employees. To enhance recruitment, the City of Kelowna should develop an inclusive hiring strategy that addresses accessibility in job postings, application processes, and workplace accommodations. Establishing a disability case management program and advocating for universal accessibility in public transportation will support employees with disabilities to access jobs and foster an equitable work environment.

Goal: Build an inclusive workplace by enhancing accessibility in hiring, training, and accommodations to support the employment of individuals with diverse abilities.

27. **Improve staff competency related to accessibility and disability.**

    27.1 Establish accessibility and disability inclusion training as mandatory for managers, directors, and executive directors. | Mid-term |

    27.2 Integrate disability awareness training into the onboarding process for all new hires. | Short-term |

28. **Increase recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities and older adults.**

    28.1 Building on the DEI Strategic Plan, continue to develop and implement an inclusive hiring strategy that addresses accessibility barriers related to recruitment (including the accessibility of job postings and ability to apply) and also supports the entire onboarding and promotion cycle of an employee with a disability. | Short-term |

Best practice: An additional more detailed review specific to accessibility is possible with appropriate consultant budget at a cost of approximately $12,500 - $20,000

28.2 Review the application process and implement strategies to improve the accessibility of applying for jobs. | Short-term |

28.2.1 Create an accessibility and accommodation statement.

28.2.2 Continue to deepen and strengthen the human resource team's community partnerships with key partners supporting job seekers with disabilities.

28.2.3 Review new job postings to ensure that they are reflective of the true work requirements such as the need for a driver's license or being able to lift a minimum weight requirement.

29.   **Improve provision of workplace accommodations.**

29.1 Explore opportunities to remove barriers for flexible work and collaborate with unions as needed. | Short-term |

29.2 Continue to support and communicate a disability case management program (including accommodation processes), informed by disability service organizations and City staff who have disabilities. | Ongoing |

29.3 Uphold workplace accommodation policy for recruitment, onboarding, and retention of new and existing employees with best practices in terms of accessibility and disability inclusion. | Short-term |

By implementing these recommendations and actions over the next decade, the City of Kelowna can make significant strides in creating a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming community for all residents and visitors. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and updates to the plan will ensure that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of people with disabilities in Kelowna.

Appendix A: Glossary of terms

The terms of accessibility and disability are complex and ever-changing as society grows and develops. The Government of British Columbia defines Accessibility as follows:

"Accessibility means that all people can take part in their communities through work, play and other daily activities. Accessibility is about removing barriers so people can feel included and have independence. Accessibility is important for everyone, especially people with disabilities."[1]

Accessible Pedestrian System (APS): "Provides auditory, visual and tactile information so that a person with vision and/or hearing loss will know when it's safe (i.e., when the walk phase begins) to cross at a set of traffic signals. In addition, an APS may provide information to help a person with blindness travel in a straight line across a street or roadway."[2] APS was previously referred to as audible pedestrian signals.

Accommodations: Reactive measures that seek to remove barriers caused by inaccessible design, programming, or processes.[3]

ALT Text: Also known as "alternative text," ALT Text explains the look or purpose of an image, chart or other visual information. Screen readers, used by individuals who are blind read the ALT-text aloud, allowing them the full experience of the information provided that is otherwise only available to those with full vision.

American Sign Language (ASL): "A complete, natural language that has the same linguistic properties as spoken languages, with grammar that differs from English. ASL is expressed by movements of the hands and face."[4]

Attitudinal barriers: When barriers are created by people acting upon false ideas when interacting with people with disabilities.

Barrier: "Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of a person with [a disability]. Barriers can be caused by environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and affected by intersecting forms of discrimination."[5]

Braille: "A form of written language for [people with sight loss], in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips."[6]

Communication Access Real Time (CART): "The live, word-for-word transcription of speech to text so that individuals can read what is being said in group settings and at personal appointments on a laptop or a larger screen. CART services can be provided on-site or remotely, in both English and French, via a secure website."[7]

Disability: A complex term that is based on a person's physical body experiencing barriers created by the environment that prevent a person from fully participating in the community to the greatest extent possible. Many members of the disability community prefer the term disability; however, this is not necessarily the case for everyone, and other terms may be preferable for some members of the community.

Equity: "Equity is the fair treatment and access to equal opportunity (justice) that allows the unlocking of one's potential, leading to the further advancement of all peoples. The equity pursuit is about the identification and removal of barriers to ensure the full participation of all people and groups."[8]

Inclusion: "Inclusion is a universal human right and its objective is to accept, welcome and embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, medical or other need. Inclusion consists of the efforts and practices to ensure groups or individuals with different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and treated equally."[9]

Inclusive employment: Inclusive employment refers to a work environment that actively seeks to accommodate and integrate individuals with disabilities into the workforce.

Invisible disability: "A physical, mental or neurological condition that is not visible from the outside, yet can limit or challenge a person's movements, senses, or activities."[10]

Live captioning: Live captioning is an umbrella term that provides text-based information to participants and is designed for live events and is performed in real-time. This can be done via automatic speech recognition technologies or professional captioners.

Plain language: "A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information."[11]

Multi-use pathways: "Off street pathways that are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and can be used by any non motorized user. This includes people walking, cycling, skateboarding, kick scootering, in-line skating, and using other

active modes. Multi-use pathways may also be referred to as shared-use pathways, multi-use trails, and boulevard multi-use pathways."[12]

Neurodivergent/Neurodiversity: Umbrella terms used to describe differences in the way people's brains work. The terms often refers to individuals with autism spectrum disorder but also can refer to other neurological differences, including ADHD, sensory integration disorders etc.

Tactile: Tactile information, signals and wayfinding provide the means for individuals to access information through touch, either by input through their hands (e.g. raised print) or information received by tapping a white cane.

Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSI): Tactile walking surface indicators (TWSIs) are a standardized surface, detectable underfoot or by a long white cane, to assist people with low vision or blindness by alerting or guiding them.[13]

Universal Design: "The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability."[14]

Wayfinding: "Wayfinding has the function to inform people of the surroundings in the (unfamiliar) built environment, it is important to show information at strategic points to guide people into the right directions."[15]

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[1] The Accessible British Columbia Act – Plain Language Summary | Accessibility Legislation for the Province of BC, 2021

[2] Clearing our Path. CNIB Foundation, 2019

[3] Accessibility Vs. Accommodation, Accessibility @ UW-Madison, 2023

[4] What Is American Sign Language (ASL)?, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 2021

[5] Accessible British Columbia Act. Government of British Columbia, 2021.

[6] Braille - The Reading Fingers. Translate Plus, 2015

[7] CART – Communication Access Realtime Translation, Canadian Hearing Services, 2023

[8] Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 2021

[9] What is Inclusion? Inclusion Ontario. 2022

[10] What is an invisible disability? Invisible Disabilities Association, 2023

[11] What is Plain Language? Plain Language Network. 2023

[12] British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide. Government of British Columbia, 2019.

[13] Canadian Standards Association. (2023). CSA B651-23: Accessible design for the built environment. CSA Group.

British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide. Government of British Columbia, 2019.

[14] Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. National Disability Authority, 2020.

[15] Introduction to Wayfinding. Design Workplan.

Appendix B: Environmental Scan

Environmental Scan Summary – Kelowna Accessibility Plan

INTRODUCTION

Building on in-house research and a wealth of experience in wellbeing and accessibility, Happy Cities and MAC conducted a detailed environmental scan. The scan included existing data, plans, and policy to lay the foundation for early direction of the Kelowna Accessibility Plan.

PRINCIPLES AND GOALS OF KEY DOCUMENTS

From the City

Kelowna, despite not having any previous Accessibility Plans, has identified the importance of accessibility in a number of community plans and guiding policies, including the following:

Kelowna Official Community Plan - Chapter 9: Equitable Community

The OCP includes high level goals that inform accessibility improvements:

- Enhanced Inclusivity: Ensure all community members, including those with disabilities, have fair access to city resources and services.
- Improved Infrastructure: Develop more accessible infrastructure, benefiting individuals with mobility challenges.
- Community Engagement: Encourage collaboration with disability advocacy groups and residents to identify and address accessibility barriers.
- Reconciliation Efforts: Strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and incorporate their perspectives.
- Policy Integration: Integrate accessibility considerations into broader social planning efforts.

Accessible Parking Permits

- Ensure individuals with disabilities have access to designated parking spaces.
- Permits are available for people with permanent mobility impairments (renewed every three years) and temporary impairments (valid for one year).
- Passes are available for people who:
  - Need an extra wide stall to get in and out of your vehicle

- ○ Can't walk more than 100 metres
- ○ Are legally blind

Accessibility Measures for Hotels & Motels Bylaw

This bylaw establishes accessibility requirements for hotels and motels to remove physical barriers to access for people with disabilities.

Adaptive Recreation Programs & Access Passes

The Adaptive Recreation Program is intended to improve access to recreational activities and facilities for individuals with disabilities.

- This primarily occurs through two routes:
  - ○ Offer adaptive recreation programs
  - ○ Offer discount recreation passes (called Access Passes)
- More than 35 programs are offered each season for adults and children including assisted, adapted and wheelchair options
- The City also works with parents, caregivers, agencies and support workers to ensure special needs are considered in finding the right fit for each individual.
- Three types of access passes are available:

  - ○ Combination pass: This pass provides the most comprehensive access, including programs for people with disabilities, swimming, and fitness center access, plus a 50% discount on some fitness programs.

  - ○ Access Pass - Program: This pass is focused on providing access to seasonal adaptive programs specifically designed for people with disabilities, with a 50% discount on some fitness programs.

  - ○ Access Pass - Facility: This pass allows access to swim times and the fitness center, making it ideal for those who primarily use these facilities.

Community for All Action Plan

The *Community for All Action Plan* emphasizes collaboration and community health.

- The goal of the *Community for All Action Plan* is to reduce chronic diseases and social isolation through increasing health, physical activity, social connections, accessibility and equity.

- Between 2016 and 2018, the plan aimed to implement 31 recommended actions with the help of various community stakeholders. The City of Kelowna took the lead on 21 of these actions, while the remaining 10 will require joint efforts from the community. Recommendations are organized around the following key themes:

  - Inclusive Community: increase opportunities for social connections, physical activity and intergenerational activities;

  - Healthy Neighbourhood Design & Healthy Natural Environments: enhance City parks and buildings to ensure they are age and ability friendly;

  - Healthy Housing: enhance housing policies to increase the diversity and affordability of housing;

  - Healthy Transportation Networks: prioritize active transportation and encourage mobility for all residents; and;

  - Healthy Food Systems: promote healthy eating through education, providing social opportunities and through connecting local farmers and residents.

- Two of the City-led actions that arose from this Plan included 1) an All Ages and Abilities Parks Assessment and 2) an All Ages and Abilities City Buildings Assessment, collectively called the "Community for All, City Parks and Buildings Assessment".

  - City staff assessed 157 City Parks including city-wide parks, recreation parks, community parks and neighbourhood parks plus some selected natural areas and, 76 city buildings under more than 218 checklist items.

  - Some of the highlights are that 51% of parks have playgrounds and the majority of city parks have environments which encourage social interactions, roughly 70% of city parks and 82% of public buildings assessed have a transit stop located within 500 metres. 80% of major city public buildings offer automatic door openers and have elevators. Also, all

public pools are provided with lifts and all public gyms have accessible exercise equipment.

- ○ Some of the areas for improvement are playground accessibility, passenger loading zones, pathways to amenities, assistive listening systems, reviewing recreational facilities and, signage and wayfinding.

Healthy Housing Strategy

The City of Kelowna developed this strategy to address the community's pressing housing issues in 2018.

One of the most relevant recommended action details is encouraging universal and accessible design. The action details are to develop policy direction for the Official Community Plan (OCP) to encourage new construction to incorporate universal accessible design features. Work with partner organizations to educate the new home building/development community about the benefits of universal accessible design. Interior Health to provide an opportunity for home health staff to share housing related needs of clients and explore opportunities to support universal and adaptable housing design.

Another action from this plan: Enhance the City of Kelowna and Interior Heath's role in community collaboration and research on housing: The City of Kelowna has the opportunity to act as an on-going hub for community collaborations on housing. The City of Kelowna will host an annual Housing Symposium to provide information on universal and accessible design, energy efficiency and grants and opportunities to encourage developers, builders, lenders, housing providers and social organizations to work together through housing partnerships in Kelowna.

Terms of Reference - Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is established in accordance with the Accessible British Columbia Act.

- The Committee make up includes the following goals:
    - ○ At least six members are:
    - ○ persons with disabilities, or

○ individuals who support, or are from organizations that support, persons with disabilities who reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in British Columbia; and

○ at least one member is an Indigenous person.

● The Committee typically once a month.

● Routine operations and any special initiatives of the Committee will be funded by allocations within the Active Living & Culture Division and Partnership & Investments Division budgets

Snow and Ice Control

Kelowna's Snow and Ice Control policy has the goal to provide a safe and reliable transportation network while protecting the environment, providing excellent customer service/citizen service and managing risk. It:

● applies from November 01 to March 01

● includes all streets under the jurisdiction of the City of Kelowna, and those areas contained within City road right of way, City statutory right of ways and Section 4 roads.

● includes snow removal from the downtown core, designated business districts to ensure safe and reliable transportation networks.

● Includes specified timelines to clear snow from key areas, such as bus stops and school drop off zones within specified timelines. These include:

○ Active transportation routes: plowed within 24 hours of the end of a storm

However:

● The City is not responsible for clearing most sidewalks.

○ Property owners are required to clear snow from sidewalks adjacent to their property within 24 hours of the end of a storm.

○ The City is responsible for maintaining the sidewalks listed under the exemption to section 2.5.1 of Traffic Bylaw No. 8120.

○

● On-street bicycle lanes and road shoulders/boulevards will not be cleared and may be used for snow storage.

● Gravel pathways are not cleared.

Snow and Ice Control for Parks and Civic Properties

There is a separate snow and ice control policy for parks and civic properties. Within this policy:

- Paved pathways within a Priority 1 property will be cleared to bare pavement within 48 hours of the accumulation of snow or ice.

- Paved pathways within a Priority 2 property will be cleared to bare pavement within 72 hours of the accumulation of snow or ice.

Intermunicipal Transportation Service and Regulation Bylaw

- Establish an intermunicipal scheme for transportation.
- Allow multiple municipalities to collaborate on transportation services and regulations.

2.5 Snow and Rubbish Removal

BL9555, BL10666 & BL12553 amended sub-section 2.5.1:

2.5.1 **Sidewalks**. **Owners** or **Occupiers** of real property shall remove snow, ice, or **rubbish** from the **sidewalk** and walkways bordering (whether directly adjacent to, or separated by a boulevard, landscaping, or other portion of either the property or the road) on the real property owned or occupied by them within 24 hours of the accumulation of such snow, ice or **rubbish**.

(a) **Owners** or **occupiers** of real property may be exempt from removing such snow, ice or **rubbish** from a **sidewalk** along stretches of road bordering real property if an application is made and approved pursuant to this bylaw.

(b) Pursuant to Section 154(1) of the *Community Charter*, **Council** delegates to the **Roadways Operations Manager** the duties and powers of **Council** to approve an exemption to Subsection 2.5.1 of this bylaw.

(c) The exemption to Subsection 2.5.1 may be approved if it complies with one or more of the following criteria:
  (i) there is a grade difference of 3 meters or greater between the real property and the adjacent sidewalk,
  (ii) the real property is owned by the City of Kelowna,
  (iii) the real property is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve, or
  (iv) other site constraints as determined by the **Roadways Operations Manager**.

(d) An application made pursuant to this Subsection will be made to the **Roadways Operations Manager** in writing by the **owner(s)** of the land that is subject to the application, or by a person authorized by the **owner(s)**.

(e) An application made pursuant to this Subsection will be submitted to the **City** on the prescribed application form approved by the **Roadways Operations Manager**.

(f) The following information is required for an application pursuant to this Subsection:
  (i) Application form,
  (ii) Real property civic address and legal description,
  (iii) Exemption rationale, and
  (iv) Owner's Authorization Form (if applicable).

Parks and Public Spaces Bylaw

- Regulate the use and maintenance of parks and public spaces.
- Ensure parks are safe, accessible, and enjoyable for all community members.

A new Parks and Recreation plan is currently being developed.

Parks Master Plan

Sidewalk and Walkway Maintenance and Inspection

Maintain and inspect sidewalks and walkways to ensure they are safe and accessible for pedestrians.

Sign Bylaw

- Regulate the placement, size, and type of signs within the city.
- Ensure signs are safe, aesthetically pleasing, and do not obstruct accessibility.

Tourist Oriented Destination Signs

Provide guidelines for the placement and design of signs that direct tourists to key destinations within the city.

Key documents from other jurisdictions

We have undertaken a comprehensive review and analysis of several key documents. These include the Accessible BC Act, the Accessible Canada Act, the City of Regina Accessibility Plan, and the Draft City of Richmond Accessibility Plan. Each of these documents aims to promote accessibility and remove barriers for individuals with disabilities. The Kelowna Accessibility Plan can draw inspiration from these plans, considering their principles, goals, and strategies to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.

The Accessible British Columbia Act

The Kelowna Accessibility Plan is also the result of the Accessibility BC (ABC) Act. The ABC Act directs municipalities to adopt an accessibility plan and establish a resident committee. It focuses on (a) inclusion; (b) adaptability; (c) diversity; (d) collaboration; (e) self-determination; and (f) universal design

This provincial legislation aims to promote accessibility and remove barriers for people with disabilities in the province.

Key parts of the Act include establishing accessibility committees, which Kelowna already done. The Committee has a role in informing this Accessibility plan, and accessibility standards in areas like employment, services, the built environment, information and communications. For the Kelowna Accessibility Plan, the City and Committee has chosen the following areas of focus:

- Built environment
- Transportation
- Programs and services

- Information and communication
- Employment
- Education and training
- Procurement

RECENT ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS IN GUIDING POLICY

Recently, different legislative bodies updated and are updating some of the Accessibility Standards and Requirements that will have an impact on Rossland.

BC Building Code 2024

BC Building Code changes effective March 2024 and 2025 will affect how the City issues building permits. Improved accessibility requirements in the BC Building Code aim to ensure that buildings are designed and constructed in a way that allows people of all abilities to access and navigate them safely.

New accessibility requirements for new commercial and public buildings and their common spaces to enable access for customers and staff include:

- All building entrances and entrances to accessible washrooms must provide a power-operated door
- An elevator is required in large two and three-storey buildings
- Full-sized changing space in universal washrooms
- When announced, the new code stated that as of March 10, 2025, large new condominium and apartment buildings will require 100% adaptable suites and first-floor suites in smaller apartment buildings. This helps people stay in their homes through illness, injury or aging, provides accessible housing options for people living with disabilities, and minimizes future retrofitting costs.
  - The requirement that all new large condominium and apartment buildings include 100% adaptable suites as of March 10, 2025 has been stayed for the time being. This is due to concerns among developers regarding the higher cost of such developments, which were not accounted for during the planning stages of new builds, prior to the BC Building Code update announcement.

CAN-ASC-2.1 Outdoor Spaces

Although the final standard is expected in spring 2025, we have included this draft standard to prepare proactively due to the importance that outdoor space has in Kelowna. The Standard on outdoor spaces envisions accessible, barrier-free, and inclusive outdoor spaces. To achieve this vision, this Standard shows value in the principle of universal accessibility that ensures no one is left behind. It contains technical requirements to be applied to the design of all newly constructed or redeveloped outdoor spaces, facilities, and areas undergoing major renovation.

Key requirements are described in groups that stem from the design principle framework and include: site planning, common measures, facilities and furniture, surfaces and wayfinding.

WHAT WE HAVE READ

Area	Document	Type of policy	Highlights
Accessibility in general	Accessibility Measures for Hotels & Motels Bylaw	Municipal Bylaw	It follows the BC Building Code plus some additional recommendations: ● Parking: Extra wide stalls for lift-equipped vans, level parking spaces and access aisles. ● Availability of properly equipped rooms listed online, video phones in lobbies, TTY access, Braille and embossed lettering on elevators and signs, tactile strips to indicate stair locations.
	Accessible BC Act	BC Policy	This Act aims to promote accessibility in the province. It covers a wide range of topics including definitions, recognition and accountability, accessible organizations, and accessibility standards.
	Accessible Canada Act	Federal Policy	The Accessible Canada Act aims to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities in areas under federal jurisdiction by 2040.
	British Columbia Human Rights Code	BC Policy	The BC Human Rights Code aims to promote equal dignity and rights for all people in B.C. by prohibiting discrimination and promoting inclusiveness across employment, housing, services and publications based on protected characteristics like race, religion, age, gender identity and disability through a complaint and enforcement process aiming to reasonably balance individual rights with public interest considerations.
	Building Accessibility Handbook 2020		Illustrations and explanatory text to support users to apply the BC Building Code 2018 requirements to make buildings more accessible.

	City of Regina Accessibility Plan	Supporting documentation	Plan by Happy Cities and Meaningful Access Consulting with engagement with people with disabilities, older adults and advocates through surveys, interviews, focus groups and pop-up events informed the development of an Accessibility Plan to guide the City of Regina in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation in community life for all ages and abilities.
	Community for All - Appendix B: Community Inventory	Municipal documentation	The "Community for All - Community Inventory" document by the City of Kelowna provides a snapshot of current city and community services that contribute to the vision of a healthy, safe, active, and inclusive city for seniors, children, and individuals with diverse abilities.
	Community for All Action Plan	Municipal documentation	The "Healthy City Strategy Report" by the City of Kelowna, developed in partnership with Interior Health, focuses on creating healthy places and spaces, enhancing community health, and improving the quality of life for all residents. The strategy emphasizes the importance of how communities are planned and built, as well as the services and resources provided within them, which directly impact people's physical and social health. The report identifies six theme areas, with "Community for All" being the first, aiming to adapt policies, plans, and programs to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Additionally, the strategy addresses key issues such as housing, climate action, and community trends. The Healthy Housing Strategy focuses on the broader topic of housing and its direct impact on physical and social health. The Community Climate Action Plan and Corporate Energy and GHG Emissions Plan highlight Kelowna's |

			commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating efficient, compact communities. The report also provides detailed population and demographic information to support organizational and program planning, policy analysis, and community development.
	Draft City of Richmond Accessibility Plan	Relevant Policy	Richmond's Accessibility Plan provides a framework for removing participation barriers over the next decade through strategic pillars, actions and cross-sector collaboration informed by extensive consultation with people with disabilities on barriers and priorities, with progress monitoring to guide ongoing improvements.
Advocacy	Dimensions of Accessibility	Supporting documentation	Accessibility for persons with disabilities involves several interrelated dimensions that provide understanding and description including workplaces, person-centred services, transportation, information and communication and environments.
	OCP - Chapter 9: Equitable Community	Municipal Policy	Chapter 9 of Kelowna's 2040 Official Community Plan focuses on creating an equitable community by incorporating equity into planning decisions and resource allocation. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that all community members, including those from equity-seeking groups such as Indigenous people, people experiencing homelessness, women, racialized communities, LGBTQ2+ communities, veterans, and people with disabilities, have fair access to city resources and opportunities. The chapter also highlights the need for an equity analysis to identify and address existing inequities in Kelowna.

Additionally, Chapter 9 aims to strengthen relationships with the syilx/Okanagan people |

			through initiatives that support reconciliation. It encourages the development of diverse partnerships to tackle complex social planning issues and increase community well-being.
	Terms of Reference - Accessibility Advisory Committee	Municipal Policy	The "Accessibility Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference (2022-2026)" document outlines the committee's role in assisting the City of Kelowna to identify and remove barriers for people with disabilities. The committee advises on the development and updates of the City's Accessibility Plan, identifies barriers related to civic infrastructure and services, and provides a process for receiving public comments on accessibility issues. The committee consists of nine voting members, including persons with disabilities, an Indigenous person, and community members at large. Members must be residents of Kelowna or support a resident, be available for meetings, and have a commitment to the committee's objectives.
	THE WARNING OF THE DANGERS OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER - Bylaw 7707	Municipal Bylaw	The "Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Signs Bylaw No. 7538" mandates the posting of warning signs about the dangers of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) in all premises licensed for the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages within the City of Kelowna. The bylaw specifies the locations where these signs must be displayed, such as in conspicuous places visible to customers as they enter the premises and in public washrooms. The bylaw aims to educate and inform the public about the risks associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy, thereby

			reducing the incidence of FASD. It underscores the importance of public awareness and the role of licensed establishments in promoting health and safety within the community.
Built environment	BC Building Code	BC Policy	The latest update lists specific changes effective March 2024 and March 2025 to promote accessibility through requirements such as power-operated doors, elevators, inclusive signage, assisted listening systems, and adaptable dwellings designed to accommodate changing needs, helping to ensure buildings are navigable and usable for people of all abilities.
	CAN-ASC-2.1 Outdoor Spaces	Federal Policy	The draft Canadian Standard on Accessible Outdoor Spaces aims to promote universal accessibility through requirements for site planning, common measures, facilities/furniture, surfaces, wayfinding, maintenance, and recreational equipment to help ensure outdoor environments are barrier-free and usable for people of all ages and abilities. The final standard is expected in spring 2025.
	CSA B651:23 Accessible design for the built environment	Federal Policy	The technical requirements in this Standard cover design aspects of physical spaces and the elements within them to help ensure they are accessible to a wide variety of people having different abilities and disabilities.
	Parks and Public Spaces Bylaw	Municipal Bylaw	3.24 "Except for conveyances for the handicapped, children's carriages and strollers, no Person shall ride or drive any Vehicle or other mode of conveyance outside of designated access roads, lanes or parking lots, without a valid access permit under Section 4.3 of this bylaw. Self propelled vehicles limited to bicycles, trailers pulled by bicycles, roller blades and skateboards are permitted provided they are

			used on designated pathways or roads, are operated in a safe manner and within any posted speed limits."
	Community for All Action Plan, Parks and Buildings Assessment Report	Municipal Plan	The plan identifies areas to adapt policies, plans and programs to respond to the evolving needs of the community. Taking steps to enable seniors to live healthier lifestyles will provide co-benefits to children and residents including people with disabilities, enabling them to be active and be engaged within the community. In 2017 the City completed an assessment of city parks and buildings as they relate to age and ability friendly design.
Information and communications	Sign Bylaw	Municipal Bylaw	The "Sign Bylaw No. 11530" by the City of Kelowna sets the rules and regulations for both public and private property within city limits. It governs where signs may be placed, the size, number, type, and appearance of permitted signs, and prohibits certain types of signs. The bylaw also outlines when a permit is required for a sign and the information needed for the permit application. Additionally, the bylaw includes specific definitions and interpretations related to signs, such as "Awning," "Canopy," and "Changeable Copy." It ensures that signs are safe, aesthetically pleasing, and do not obstruct accessibility. The bylaw aims to maintain a cohesive and orderly appearance of signage throughout the city while addressing safety and accessibility concerns.
	Tourist oriented destination signs	Municipal Policy	The "Tourist Oriented Destination Signs" policy by the City of Kelowna aims to provide clear and consistent direction signs to help visitors and residents navigate to major attractions within the city. The policy is designed to optimize business success,

Programs and Services	Adaptive recreation programs & Access Passes	Municipal Policy	reduce driver confusion, and minimize sign clutter on roadways. It includes criteria for sign placement and eligibility, ensuring that businesses comply with federal, provincial, and municipal regulations, maintain a valid business license, and are accessible to the public. Additionally, the policy outlines the application process for businesses seeking to install tourist-oriented destination signs. Businesses must meet specific criteria, such as being open to the public for a minimum of 12 consecutive weeks per year and having regular stated hours of operation. The application process involves submitting a form, paying an application fee, and receiving approval from the Traffic Operations Department.
			The "Adaptive Programs" by the City of Kelowna aim to ensure that all residents, including those with disabilities, have the opportunity to be active within the community. The programs include a variety of seasonal activities such as swimming, bowling, art, fitness, music, and sports. Additionally, there are popular events like the walking club, Friday night dance, and holiday dinner. The Access Office provides adaptive recreation programs and events, as well as discount recreation passes (the Access Pass) for individuals with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. The City of Kelowna also offers accessible transportation options and inclusive playgrounds to ensure that everyone can participate in these activities. Accessible playgrounds are available at locations such as Ben Lee Park, Rowcliffe Park, Rutland

			Centennial Park, and the playground at Parkinson Recreation Centre. The city also has a network of accessible walking, hiking, and cycling trails.
	Social Policies	Municipal Policy	The "Social Policies - Policy No. 360" document by the City of Kelowna outlines the city's role in promoting social sustainability through its policies, programs, and infrastructure. The policy emphasizes collaboration with the community, government, and agencies to provide childcare, engage youth, and increase the involvement of seniors. It also focuses on promoting healthy lifestyles by providing information and resources on essential health needs and offering inclusive recreational programs. Additionally, the policy highlights the importance of equity and inclusion by collaborating with other agencies to deliver programs and services that improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. It also aims to create a safe community by providing programs and services that promote safety.
Transportation	Accessible parking permits	Municipal Policy	Accessible parking permits are for individuals with permanent or temporary mobility impairments, allowing them to park in designated accessible stalls throughout the city. Accessible parking permits require a physician's recommendation. The permit aim to provice special parking privileges and access to otherwise restricted spaces, ensuring convenience and accessibility for residents.
	Intermunicipal Transportation Service and	Municipal Bylaw	The "Intermunicipal Transportation Service and Regulation Bylaw No. 10830" establishes a joint transportation scheme involving

	Regulation Bylaw		multiple municipalities, including the City of Kelowna, District of West Kelowna, District of Peachland, District of Lake Country, Regional District of Central Okanagan, and Westbank First Nation. The bylaw aims to create a community of interest by allowing these municipalities to collaborate on transportation services and regulations. It covers aspects such as transportation demand management, transit administration, and transportation and transit surveys and studies. Additionally, the bylaw establishes an Intermunicipal Advisory Board comprising the Mayors, Board Chair, and Chief of the participating municipalities. This board is responsible for overseeing the implementation and administration of the intermunicipal transportation scheme.
	Sidewalk and Walkway Maintenance and Inspection	Municipal Bylaw	The "Sidewalk and Walkway Maintenance and Inspection - Council Policy No. 331" by the City of Kelowna establishes service levels for the inspection and maintenance of all public sidewalks and walkways throughout the city and parks. The policy aims to provide safe passage for pedestrians by conducting annual inspections and repairing hazards that meet specific criteria within six months of the inspection. The policy outlines various types of hazards, such as cracks, heaves, settlements, deflections, scaling, and obstacles, and specifies the criteria for each. It also states that the City is not responsible for repairing or replacing boulevard improvements within the road right-of-way, except for sod.
	Snow and Ice Control	Municipal Bylaw	The "Snow Clearing and Ice Control" page by the City of Kelowna outlines the city's efforts

| | | | to maintain safe and accessible roads, sidewalks, and public spaces during winter. The city employs 80-140 employees and operates 32 snowplows and twelve sidewalk plows to clear and de-ice around 1,988 lane kilometers and service 1,020 cul-de-sacs and dead-ends. It emphasizes the importance of residents moving their cars off the street during snow events to facilitate faster and more effective snow clearing.

Additionally, the city provides detailed information on snow clearing priorities, including the maintenance of sidewalks, bus stops, and bike lanes. |
| Snow and Ice Control for Parks and Civic Properties | Municipal Policy | The "Snow and Ice Control for Parks and Civic Properties - Council Policy No. 374" by the City of Kelowna establishes minimum standards for winter snow and ice control at city parks and civic properties. The policy aims to balance public access and safety with available budget and resources. It specifies that paved pathways within Priority 1 properties will be cleared to bare pavement within 48 hours of snow or ice accumulation, while Priority 2 properties will be cleared within 72 hours. In areas with large paved plazas, a minimum 2-meter wide pathway will be cleared within 48 hours to allow pedestrian access.

The policy also outlines the methods of snow and ice control, which may include plowing, sanding, or salting, depending on factors such as temperatures, storm duration, and weather forecasts. Paved parking lots, access roads, or pathways that are not cleared will be gated and/or signed appropriately. |