



City of Port Moody Accessibility Action Plan



2023 Interim Plan

Territorial Acknowledgement

We carry out our business on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem), səliiwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), qícəy̓ (Katzie), q'wə:n̓ λ'əń (Kwantlen), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), and Stó:lō (Sto:lo) Peoples, and extend appreciation for the opportunity to work on this territory.

Contact

People with disabilities have told us that barriers make it hard to experience full and equal participation in society. We would like to understand the specific barriers people face in order to explore how we could remove them.

We are asking for feedback on the City of Port Moody's programs, services, and facilities to improve accessibility.

If you have experienced or witnessed a barrier that you would like to share with the City of Port Moody, please submit your feedback through our online form:
<https://forms.portmoody.ca/Administration/Accessibility-Feedback>

Alternate ways to provide feedback include:

Email to accessibility@portmoody.ca

Mail to: Accessibility Committee
City of Port Moody
100 Newport Drive
Port Moody, B.C.
V3H 5C3

To request a different way to provide feedback, please contact the City by email, mail, or call 604-469-4500 and we will work with you to accommodate your preferred way to submit feedback.

City of Port Moody staff will read your feedback and share it with the area of service you had trouble accessing. You may get a follow up request from us wanting to understand your experience better. If there are no questions, you may not be contacted.

The questions in the feedback survey are optional. Respondents can share as much or as little as they want. Any personal details shared will be kept safe as required under section 26(c) of the [Freedom of information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

Definitions

ABCA: Accessible British Columbia Act

Disability: an inability to participate fully and equally in society as a result of the interaction of an impairment and a barrier.

Impairment: includes a physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.

RHFAC: Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (a rating system developed to help property owners and managers measure the accessibility of their buildings and sites and promote increased access through the adoption of Universal Design principles).

Introduction

The purpose of the City of Port Moody Accessibility Action Plan is to examine opportunities and provide actions that identify, remove, and prevent barriers for Port Moody residents and visitors of all abilities interacting with the City of Port Moody.

These actions further the City's efforts to make its workplace, services, and built environment accessible and welcoming to people of all ages and abilities. This plan also enables the City to meet the requirements of the Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA or "the Act"), which came into force for municipalities in British Columbia (B.C.) on September 1, 2022.

The ABCA requires municipalities to implement the following:

1. An accessibility committee,
2. An accessibility plan, and
3. A mechanism for feedback on accessibility.

This is an interim plan that outlines the work that has been initiated or planned to address accessibility barriers in Port Moody. Changes to this plan will be made as the work of the accessibility committee progresses, feedback is sought from staff, Council, and select Council committees, and as we hear from the public through our feedback mechanism.

Governance and Legislation

Accessible British Columbia Act

In June 2021 the Province of British Columbia passed the Accessible BC Act which requires the establishment of an accessibility committee, development of an accessibility plan, and the provision of a public feedback mechanism.

In the spirit of *Nihil de nobis, sine nobis* ('Nothing about us without us'), government will work with People with Disabilities and the Provincial Accessibility Committee (PAC) from 2022-2025 to achieve the following priorities:

- Priority 1: creating a culture of accessibility and inclusion
- Priority 2: information and communications
- Priority 3: buildings, infrastructure and public spaces
- Priority 4: employment in the B.C. Public Service
- Priority 5: delivery of goods and services

For now, the Act only applies to certain prescribed public sector organizations (“accessible organizations”) such as school districts, municipalities, libraries, municipal police departments, post-secondary education institutions, regional districts, and health authorities.

The ABCA requires municipalities to consider the following principles in developing an accessibility standard: inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design.

Accessibility Committee

Under the Act, an Accessibility Committee is a requirement of prescribed organizations, and must be developed by September 2023. Accessibility committees are intended to help organizations identify barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization, and to advise the organizations on how to remove and prevent these barriers. The AAP serves as a primer for this important work by identifying previously completed work, work currently underway, planned work, and potential opportunities.

To the extent possible, the Accessibility Committee should:

- Have at least half of their members be persons with disabilities or individuals who represent a disability-serving organization (a minimum requirement of 1 person will be initially accepted but this is strongly unadvised).
- Have a membership which reflects the diversity of persons with disabilities or other barriers to accessing public spaces and services in British Columbia.
- Have at least one member who is an Indigenous person.

The Accessibility Committee is structured as an internal committee of City and Library staff. This allows for quick progress on reviewing and contributing to elements of the AAP and focus the plan initially on high-priority internal needs such as facility accessibility improvements, policy and procedure improvements, and staff training. Starting small is also consistent with advice from the Accessibility Hub: successful, long-lasting committees almost always start off small, simple and focused, and then grow organically over time—adding breadth, depth and complexity in response to the changing needs of the members, and the changing conditions of the environment.

The City put out two calls for members for the committee and an initial membership has been established. In taking this approach, it is recognized that achieving the recommended committee composition may be challenging. Committee members are not required to divulge

why they identify as having an accessibility challenge and are encouraged to only share as much as they are comfortable with.

To identify as being a member of the accessibility community, staff can reach out to the City of Port Moody's Manager of Human Resources.

[Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility \(IDEA\) Committee](#)

The IDEA Committee is a Council committee that consists of a Chair and Vice-Chair (Council members) as well as members of the public. The committee provides advice and recommendations in the following areas:

- Reviewing proposed or existing policies, programs, and bylaws related to services for, or relating, to accessibility in all its forms, Newcomers to Canada and people from diverse backgrounds, and Reconciliation.
- Reviewing short-, medium-, and long-term goals for accessibility and equity within municipal jurisdiction.
- Opportunities for strengthening the City's existing recreation programs and services for all residents.
- Opportunities for Reconciliation, anti-racism and inclusion actions and programs.
- Providing feedback on how to more meaningfully connect with communities and groups not always reached by traditional channels, with opportunities to act as liaisons where warranted.
- Hearing and providing recommendations to delegations by community groups, social service agencies and others and makes recommendations to Council.
- Reviewing proposed or existing policies, programs, and bylaws related to services for or relating to people experiencing homelessness or housing precariousness that are not within the purview of the Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Force.
- Considering other social planning issues as may be referred by Council.
- Any other matters referred by Council.

The Manager of HR is the staff liaison for the IDEA Committee and is also a member of the Accessibility Committee to support linkages and alignment between the two committees.

Refinements to the IDEA terms of reference and/or recruitment may fulfill ABCA's requirements in future.

Implementation Plan

The City of Port Moody is leading several projects that will reduce barriers for people with impairments. Some of the projects have, as their main objective, the goal of increasing accessibility while some projects have other primary goals but include a careful consideration of accessibility factors. These initiatives have been categorized under four accessibility goals:

- Goal 1 – Enhancing the Built Environment
- Goal 2 – Reducing Barriers to Transportation
- Goal 3 – Strengthening Accessible Communication and Engagement
- Goal 4 – Expanding Inclusive Recreation and Access to Green Spaces

The following sections describe the projects under each goal. As the City of Port Moody continues to build on its accessibility work and hear more from those who are experiencing accessibility barriers firsthand, we will be developing new actions and initiatives to further advance this important work.

Goal 1 – Enhancing the Built Environment

Civic Building Accessibility Improvements

Civic Facility Accessibility Assessments

Phase 1 of this project includes having accessibility assessments completed with a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification rating on 17 municipal facilities (excluding Civic Centre, Recreation Complex, Arts Centre, Old Orchard Caretaker Residence and Old Fire Hall). It also includes detailed reports for these facilities featuring recommended upgrades and renovations to improve accessibility and inclusion, and a prioritization matrix ranking these recommendations. Phase 2 will include the selection and implementation of the improvements and upgrades.

For the accessibility assessments and improvement recommendations, the following categories will be assessed for each facility:

- vehicular access
- exterior approach and entrance
- interior circulation
- interior services and environment
- sanitary facilities
- wayfinding and signage
- emergency systems
- additional use of space
- residential units
- trails and pathways

In addition to physical disabilities or challenges, the assessments will address social inclusion and diversity (e.g., gender-neutral washrooms) and recommendations will consider universal design elements to accommodate the widest range of potential users.

The deliverables for this project include the following for each facility:

- Accessibility assessment including RHFAC rating or scorecard
- Detailed report showing recommended upgrades and renovations to improve accessibility and inclusion, and a prioritization matrix ranking these recommendations

Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Grant

The Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Grant has been earmarked for the Civic Centre, Recreation Complex and Arts Centre to help improve accessibility and inclusion at these facilities. AccuSplit assessments (including an RHFAC rating) have been completed as well as detailed reports showing short-term, medium-term and long-term improvement recommendations. Work is being done to identify potential short-term improvements to implement using the remaining grant.

Age Friendly Plan

Council has endorsed Port Moody's Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan to guide our city in becoming an age-friendly community – a place where older people and those with limited mobility can lead active lifestyles, live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society. The Implementation Plan has 52 actions, which includes 26 completed actions.

Playground Improvements

A total of six playgrounds, including Art Wilkinson, Barber Street, Town Centre, Seaview, Twin Creeks and Westhill, were upgraded as to provide additional play elements, replace existing structures that were approaching or at end of life, and/or improve existing surfacing.

Accessibility and inclusivity were considered in the selection of the play structures and playground surfacing (i.e., engineered wood fibre / rubberized surfacing), allowing those with mobility impairments to access as well as enjoy the playground equipment.

Adaptable Housing

Adaptable housing is designed and built so that accessibility features can be added more easily and inexpensively after construction. This will benefit anyone whose mobility is limited due to age, disability or illness, making it easier for them to function more independently in their own home.

New standards for the design and construction of adaptable housing have been added to the BC Building Code. The new standards include wider doorways, accessible entrances, extra reinforcement in bathroom walls to allow grab bars to be installed, and easy to use light switches and door handles. See Provincial Adaptable Housing Standards to learn more about the changes to support building accessibility.

On July 10, 2018, City Council adopted a new Zoning Bylaw, which includes a requirement that 50% of all new apartment units in Port Moody must meet provincial adaptable housing standards.

Gender Inclusive Washroom Policy

The City is in the beginning stages of developing a gender inclusive washroom policy to direct the way we build washrooms in new facilities, as well as considering potential retrofit approaches for existing facilities.

Goal 2 – Reducing Barriers to Transportation

Bus Stop Accessibility Improvements

This annual program facilitates making improvements for transit users throughout the City by modifying transit stops and sidewalk space to increase accessibility and comfortability. It will also include providing bus shelters in areas with high passenger loading. Eighty-five percent of the stops are now considered accessible with the goal of 100% wheelchair accessible.

Capital Rehabilitation Program for Pedestrian Accessibility

This program addresses the rehabilitation of existing sidewalks, pathways, curb letdowns, driveway crossings, and other walking facilities to improve accessibility and walkability for all users. The Transportation Committee will suggest locations or comments on the priority list, but priority will generally be given to locations undergoing work in the Local Road Network or Major Road Network Road Rehabilitation Programs, to enable resources to be more efficiently allocated. Spot improvements will also be undertaken.

Wayfinding Signage

The wayfinding signage project includes fingerpost signs and directory kiosks throughout the City. A mobility assessment was conducted prior as part of the Wayfinding Strategy. Signage was installed with attention paid to accessibility matters such as using pictograms (to reduce language barriers), font type and arrow size (to minimize readability issues), and denoting which routes are accessible for people in wheelchairs on kiosk maps.

St Johns Street Multi-Use Pathway

The St. Johns Street Multi-Use Pathway project is the first of two phases for the active infrastructure improvements for the St. Johns Street Corridor. The project seeks to improve existing walking and cycling facilities and increase active mode choices along St. Johns Street, in accordance with recommendations from the 2017 Master Transportation Plan.

The first phase of the project, currently in construction, is the creation of an all ages and abilities facility along the south boulevard of St. Johns Street, between Moody Street and Albert Street. There will be a mixture of a Multi-Use Path and separated cycle lanes/ sidewalk, all contained within the existing grassed boulevard. Curb bulges and raised crosswalks at sideroads will improve the overall safety and help create a more welcoming space.

Goal 3 – Strengthening Accessible Communication and Engagement

Website Renewal

The City of Port Moody is committed to ensuring its website is accessible to all regardless of technology or ability. We strive to meet or exceed industry best practices. The site was built with the following features:

- code compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) (opens in new window) to ensure it displays correctly in current browsers and is compatible across different assistive technologies
- responsive design (automatically resizing the screen to suit a variety of platforms)
- built-in language translation, which improves accessibility for ESL viewers
- designed using CSS allowing for content to be compatible with screen readers
- ALT tags and title tags (alternative text for an image or a visual on a web page)
- text size that can be increased and decreased

Accessibility will be one of the factors that will be considered when the City conducts a website renewal project, starting in 2024.

Staff Training

The City is pursuing ongoing staff training opportunities, in alignment with the internal IDEA strategy. Examples of staff training that have been completed through the IDEA strategy include:

- Accessible Workplaces: Supporting People with Disabilities In-Person and Online - the sessions provided team members, managers, and the executive leadership with a better understanding of how to communicate, support and work with people with various types of disabilities.
- Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Fundamentals: The sessions provided employees, the Senior Leadership Team and Council, with an understanding of:
 - o the key concepts of IDE along with bias, stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination
 - o how personal dimensions of diversity impact perceptions and behaviours in the workplace
 - o strategies to foster a more inclusive and equitable environment

Future sessions are planned for 2023 and 2024 and will expand the role of Accessibility within the IDEA fundamentals course.

- Unconscious Bias: The sessions provided employees, the Senior Leadership Team and Council, with training on unconscious bias. Participants uncover and tackle unconscious bias to understand its impact on personal experiences and work dynamics. Strategies to manage the effects of unconscious bias in the workplace and promote fairness and equity are discussed.
- Harm Reduction and Vicarious Trauma Management - for employees working in and around the Extreme Weather Response Shelter at Kyle Centre to learn about the strategies and best practices aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. The discussion included experiences that take place in a harm reduction

shelter environment, acknowledging our implicit bias (in relation to unhoused community members), and managing vicarious trauma.

- Indigenous Awareness: Colonized Rehab – a small group of staff participated in this pilot training to learn about the colonial impacts to First Nation communities resulting from Canada’s Indian Act, Indian Reserve System, Indian Residential School System. Discussion topics included decolonization, reconciliation, Aboriginal rights and title, white privilege, racism, and systemic racism. A training program for all staff on Indigenous awareness is in the process of being developed.
- Blanket Exercise – a blanket exercise is an interactive educational program that teaches the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and provides an opportunity for experiential, emotional, and thoughtful learning. It tells the story of first contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Blankets are used to represent land and the historic process of colonization and its effects on modern day relationships between Indigenous and non-indigenous people. The City hosted blanket sessions for the public as well as for staff in 2022.

Disability Management Program

We support employees with a disability or impairment through the provision of suitable duties. Where a temporary or permanent workplace accommodation is required, Human Resources, the manager, and the employee work together to assess accommodation options.

Recruitment

We ensure our recruitment and selection process is accessible by utilizing technology for recruitment, reducing potential barriers through virtual interviews and an online application process. We adjust the process to accommodate the expressed needs of candidates.

Tri-Cities Local Immigrant Partnership

Port Moody staff are part of the Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership (TCLIP), which brings community leaders and organizations together to develop welcoming and inclusive communities, where established residents and newcomers feel a sense of belonging and attachment.

As part of a national network of Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), TCLIP is part of a community-based partnership that:

- Engages service provider organizations and institutions in the Tri-Cities to integrate newcomers and immigrants by promoting a systematic approach.
- Supports Vancouver immigration partnership knowledge sharing through community-level research and a strategic program for newcomers to Canada.
- Improves coordination of services to create a more accessible system for newcomer and immigrant settlement and integration.

Goal 4 – Expanding Inclusive Recreation and Access to Green Spaces

Shoreline Trail Boardwalk Replacement

The Shoreline Trail Boardwalk Replacement Project will replace the end-of-life timber boardwalk structures at the head of the Burrard Inlet. The project will increase the overall extent of the boardwalk, replacing some of the existing gravel trail sections with boardwalk structure. The new boardwalk structure will be wider for improved accessibility as well as higher to accommodate sea level rise. The stairs and steep grades at the ends and along the length of the existing trail will be replaced with ramps for improved accessibility and handrails will be added for improved user safety. The project will be constructed in two phases, with the first phase scheduled to start in late 2023.

Salmon in the City

The Salmon in the City project is reviewing the feasibility of creating park space within an undeveloped City-owned parcel adjacent to Mossom Creek. The project is exploring various park development concepts to support stewardship activities, environmental education opportunities and passive park use.

Accessibility is being assessed as part of conceptual designs and difficult site constraints. City staff anticipate a phased approach and more passive park design initially, with some accessibility features included. This project is a partnership with the Mossom Hatchery who have recently made their hatchery fully accessible.

Lower Suter Brook Enhancement Project – Phase 1

This project is looking at opportunities for environmental enhancement of the Lower Suter Brook creek on city owned property. The goal is to restore degraded habitat and create a resilient natural area that also provides a key pedestrian corridor and trail. Trail accessibility improvements will be considered in the detailed design phase that will conclude in 2024.

Rocky Point Park and Old Orchard Park Master Plans

We're drafting a comprehensive update to the existing Rocky Point Park Master Plan (adopted in 2000) and developing a new master plan to guide upgrades for Old Orchard Park. Both plans will provide a framework for decision-making over the next 10 years.

Rocky Point and Old Orchard parks are well enjoyed by the local community and visitors from throughout the region. As the region's population grows, however, these parks face intensifying usage pressures which can lead to heightened stress on aging infrastructure and the natural environment. An updated assessment of park spaces and plans for strategic renewal will help us improve community well-being, social equity, and the resiliency of the parks' natural habitats.

The Rocky Point Master Plan Project will look at options for improvements to Rocky Point Park with a key emerging principle to ensure park accessibility and inclusivity. Some accessibility improvements that will be considered include:

- connectivity and accessibility by different modes of travel and trail/waterfront

- improved access to natural environment and all recreation, amenities and facilities.

The Old Orchard Park Master Plan Project will look at options for overall improvements to Old Orchard Park. Some accessibility improvements that will be considered include:

- connectivity and accessibility by different modes of travel and trail/waterfront
- improvements to access shoreline
- address challenges to grade at site with a concept for gently sloped ramp system

To date, public engagement feedback has also included some public opinion that stresses the importance for Old Orchard Park and Rocky Point Park accessibility improvements.

Trail Network Plan

In recent decades, Port Moody has experienced considerable growth in demand for use of trails and changes in the types of uses and trail visits. To meet this increasing demand, the City is reviewing the current trail network and looking at how to improve user experience.

The Trail Network Plan will define a vision for the City's extensive trail network and provide clear and coordinated direction for planning and managing our trails and trail-related amenities over the next 30 years.

Accessibility is being considered in terms of making the trails and trail amenities (e.g., benches) accessible to all users (those who are fully mobile, those who have mobility impairments, and those who require full assistance).

Parkland Strategy

The parkland strategy will guide long-term planning for parkland throughout Port Moody. Over the next 30 years, the strategy will provide a framework for decision-making and prioritization of investment in existing and new parkland such as parks, greenways, natural areas, and public open spaces. It will include priorities and actions to help us ensure that parkland is distributed across the city, with equal access for all to diverse spaces and amenities.

In addition to our community-wide engagement, we're engaging directly with other governments including Rights Holder First Nations and Metro Vancouver, as well as stakeholders such as School District 43, Port Moody's civic committees, environmental stewardship groups, community associations, accessibility and inclusion organizations, parks and trails user groups, and the development community.

Project accessibility considerations include accessible and inclusive playgrounds for multiple age groups, accessible public greenspaces and waterfronts, and target number of accessible parking stalls in parks.

Inlet Field

The Inlet Park Redevelopment Project will replace the existing gravel field with high-quality, all-weather, artificial turf surface. Additional improvements include:

- three smaller "Super 8" soccer pitches with wide end zones and sidelines suitable for younger players
- FIFA-regulation field for adult soccer games
- two baseball and softball diamonds
- batting cages
- children's playground (tot lot) and natural play area
- additional parking spaces
- a new fieldhouse facility (pending future funding)

Considerations for accessibility included in the design include:

- appropriate grades for paved or concrete surfaces
- a dedicated drop-off area in the parking lot for easier access to the field
- paved perimeter pathway around the field's edge
- improved access between Murray Street and the Shoreline Trail
- accessible design elements for the fieldhouse facility

Shoreline Trail Multi-Use Path Upgrades and Bridge over Noons Creek

This project will upgrade the paved multi-use path (MUP) between Murray Street and Old Orchard Park. The project will widen sections of the path to a consistent 3.3m width, reduce vertical grades to less than 8%, provide new paved surface and drainage improvements to mitigate trip hazards and improve accessibility.

A switchback ramp with handrails will be installed at Old Orchard Hall to improve accessibility from the park to Old Orchard Hall. Other improvements include provision of wayfinding signage, interpretive signage showcasing First Nations history, and new benches that include wheelchair pads.

As part of the project, the pedestrian bridge over Noons Creek will be replaced. The new MUP was designed and will be constructed as per Rick Hansen Accessibility Guidelines and is eligible for Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™. This project is targeted to be completed by the start of 2024.