

Accessibility 2024

**Making B.C. the most progressive
province in Canada for people
with disabilities by 2024**

June 2016
Two Year Progress Update



Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Message from the Premier | 2 |
| Message from the Minister | 3 |
| Message from the Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team | 4 |
| Progress by Building Block | |
| Inclusive Government | 6 |
| Accessible Service Delivery | 10 |
| Accessible Internet | 14 |
| Accessible Built Environment | 16 |
| Accessible Housing | 19 |
| Accessible Transportation | 23 |
| Income Support | 27 |
| Employment | 29 |
| Financial Security | 35 |
| Inclusive Communities | 38 |
| Emergency Preparedness | 47 |
| Consumer Experience | 48 |
| Appendix A: Community and Employer Partnerships in Support of Accessibility | 52 |
| Appendix B: Age-friendly Planning and Project Grants | 54 |
| Appendix C: Community Gaming Grants in Support of Accessibility | 59 |
| Appendix D: Resort Municipality Initiative Accessibility Related Projects | 61 |

Message from the Premier



When we launched Accessibility 2024, we set out to change attitudes, create new opportunities, and place an accessibility lens on all of our decisions. We are accomplishing those goals.

Every day, citizens, community groups, businesses and governments are working together to build a more accessible British Columbia.

Because of your hard work and commitment, there is a growing commitment to creating communities, workplaces, institutions and public spaces that are welcoming and inclusive to people with disabilities.

Over the last year, our government launched the #BCTECH strategy, which will support agencies focused on developing solutions for people with disabilities, increased asset limits for people on disability assistance, and established the Home Renovation Tax Credit for Seniors' and Persons with Disabilities. These changes are removing barriers and creating accessible, welcoming communities.

I want to thank everyone helping to achieve the goals of Accessibility 2024. Over the last two years we have laid the groundwork for meeting an ambitious goal: to make B.C. the most progressive place in Canada for people with disabilities. Together, we are well on our way.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Christy Clark in blue ink. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Christy' and the last name 'Clark' clearly legible.

Honourable Christy Clark

Premier of British Columbia

Message from the Minister



Two years ago, our Government was very proud to launch Accessibility 2024 in response to what we heard during consultations that engaged thousands of British Columbians right across the province. People talked about the importance of improving quality of life and financial security as well as increasing employment opportunities and community inclusion for people with disabilities. This report reflects our progress on all those fronts. There are investments in skills training, technology, and emergency preparedness that continue to produce positive outcomes for people with disabilities.

Accessibility 2024 has become a touchstone for our government and our partners, guiding policy and funding decisions that remove barriers and create new opportunities for people with disabilities.

Strong partnerships are at the centre of these accomplishments. I would like to recognize the commitment and hard work of the members of the Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team – the Presidents Group, the RDSP Action Group, the Minister’s Council on Employment and Accessibility and our many partners in the business and disability communities.

Together we are creating positive changes and building the inclusive, welcoming world we want to see for our children, ourselves and our communities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Stilwell".

Honourable Michelle Stilwell

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation

Message from the Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team

It's been two years since the Premier launched Accessibility 2024, and much work has been done to make B.C. a more accessible province. The Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team is proud of the actions taken to date and want to recognize the hard work and commitment of people with disabilities, family members, communities, advocates, employers, service providers, and so many others throughout the province who, every day, work to make life better for people with disabilities.

Our Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team is working hard to drive our mandates forward to support the implementation of Accessibility 2024. Some of the highlights from the past year include modernizing the *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act*, increasing asset limits for people receiving disability assistance, creating a BC Parks Accessibility Advisory Committee to advise on how to improve the visitor experience for people with disabilities in B.C. parks, and providing tools to ensure people with disabilities are prepared for emergencies.

The Presidents Group has been actively engaging the business community to provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities. By connecting with disability confident leaders and examining best practices across Canada and internationally, the Presidents Group is developing mechanisms and standards that will support employers in their recruitment and hiring of more people with disabilities. In September, events and activities were held province-wide to celebrate the successes of people with disabilities in the workplace and recognize inclusive employers as part of the annual Disability Employment Month.

In October, during RDSP Awareness Month, the RDSP Action Group released 'How to Start and Manage a Registered Disability Savings Plan in B.C.', a guide for people with disabilities and their families, which has been distributed through partners province-wide and is available online. The RDSP Action Group also collaborated on a resolution passed by the First Nations Summit to support greater promotion and enrollment of RDSPs by individuals and families living with a disability within BC's First Nation communities.

In recognition of the contributions that Aboriginal people living with disabilities are making in communities throughout B.C., government has declared November as Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month.

By working together, we are creating new opportunities for people of all abilities to work, play and participate fully in their communities. Progress updates on Accessibility 2024 are available at gov.bc.ca/accessibility

The Accessibility 2024 Leadership Team



Michelle Stilwell

Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation



Linda Larson

Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility



Tamara Vrooman

Co-Chair, Presidents Group and President and CEO of Vancity



Craig Richmond

Co-Chair, Presidents Group and President and CEO of Vancouver Airport Authority



Norah Flaherty

Chair, RDSP Action Group



Dr. Jaimie Borisoff

Interim Chair, Minister's Council on Employment and Accessibility



Neil Belanger

Executive Director, BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society



Jane Dyson

Executive Director, Disability Alliance BC

Inclusive Government

Modernized *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act* takes effect

The modernized *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act* was brought into force on January 18, 2016, supporting better access to restaurants, transit and strata properties for people with certified guide and service dogs. Guide dogs help people with visual impairments while service dogs help people with other kinds of disabilities such as hearing impairments and epilepsy. The new Act makes it clear that discrimination is unacceptable, giving certified guide or service dog handlers equal access to areas enjoyed by all members of the public. It also provides for certification of retired guide and service dogs so that they can continue to reside with their handlers – recognizing the close bond between a handler and their guide or service dog.

Government Connections

Guide and Service Dog Certification Options

The modernized *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act* includes a new provision where dog and handler teams that were not trained by a school accredited by Assistance Dogs International or the International Guide Dog Federation can take the test offered by the Justice Institute of BC in order to receive certification.



"I was impressed earlier this month by the professional delivery of the BC public access test for service dog teams. As an individual with an invisible disability, I greatly appreciate the BC government's adoption of one standard for service dogs. This will not only ensure appropriate training of dogs occurs but will also increase public education about diversity of service dogs and how to interface with dog teams in public." – Lisa and Olive

"As a handler of a small dog (9lbs), I found the [Justice Institute] exam to be a great test on all skills and even though it's designed for a larger dog, my small dog had no problems. The examiner was very friendly and put me at ease quickly."
– Anonymous

Supporting accessibility legislation

The Government of Canada has recently launched a consultation on federal accessibility legislation, and B.C. is fully supporting this engagement with a range of stakeholders in B.C. The government remains committed to consult on options for a made-in-B.C. approach to accessibility related legislation as part of Accessibility 2024.

Engaging with public servants

The BC Government Employee Accessibility Advisory Council continues to work to build awareness and understanding about accessibility and inclusion within the provincial government. The Council, made up of public servants with and without disabilities, has expanded to include members from outside the Capital region. Successes to date include advising on the development of the Work-Able Graduate Internship Program, ensuring the Work Engagement Survey is accessible for all employees, and completion of an accessibility audit of the B.C. government's human resources information website, MyHR.

Creating an accessibility confident and inclusive public service

The BC Public Service Agency (PSA) has undertaken a number of accessibility initiatives, including adding the principles of inclusion to the curriculum of the Supervisory Development Certificate and the Oath of Employment, performing an audit of MyHR videos for closed captioning, creating an @Work group called Accessibility in the BC Public Service to help employees address barriers, and adding a field to the Learning Centre sign up page allowing employees to request accommodation. As well, the PSA has provided information for employees with disabilities in the earthquake ShakeOut drill and conducted an audit of training venues across the public service for physical accessibility.

The Work-Able: Graduate Internship Program, launched September 2015, offers one-year public service internships for post-secondary students with disabilities. In its inaugural year, nine Work-Able interns worked in areas including policy development, communications and information technology. Now entering its second year, the program has expanded to 14 ministries. At the completion of their internship, interns will receive "five year in-service status" that gives them access to apply for both internal and external posted positions in the hopes that they will pursue a career in the BC Public Service.

Making voting more accessible

In the 2016 by-elections, Elections BC trialled a larger ballot to improve the voting experience for sight-impaired voters. It was well-received and Elections BC will produce the ballots in the larger size for the 2017 provincial general election.

Additionally, the *Voter Registration Regulation* was revised to include the applicant's BC Identification card number and the last six digits of the applicant's personal health number, which will make online and telephone voter registration more accessible to a wider range of voters.

Government Connections

Paula Grant, Public Service Hall of Excellence Inductee

In 2015, Paula Grant received the Premier's Legacy Award and was inducted into the BC Public Service Hall of Excellence in recognition of her exceptional and lasting contributions to the province of B.C. Paula has committed her 40+ year public service career to improving the lives of people with disabilities and their families. She has worked tirelessly to drive and influence significant initiatives to create more inclusive and community-based lives for people living with disabilities.



Paula Grant

Government Connections

A Work-Able Intern Shares Her Thoughts

"Applying for jobs, as a person with an invisible disability, is a fearful process. The fear stems from multiple 'what if' scenarios about judgement and the choice to disclose or not to disclose. The Work-Able internship diminishes that fear by recognizing that disabilities are beside the point in the job application process; the skill and talent demonstrated in one's work is what really counts."



Government Connections

Get Loud About Mental Health

Mental Health Week 2016 focused on “getting loud” about mental health, and particularly about maintaining or reclaiming positive mental health. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), which sponsors this event, shares a fundamental message: we all want to be happy and healthy. But it’s hard to be healthy in the fullest sense without positive mental health.

A group of employees at the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation in Vernon showed their support by wearing green and shouting it out! *“Getting loud means speaking up to stop the discrimination and the stigma that often go hand in hand with mental illness. It means using your voice to raise awareness and build support. For someone at work. For someone at home. For yourself.”* – CMHA #GetLoud Public Toolkit

Accessible Service Delivery

Committing to accessible service delivery

Government is always looking at ways to improve services to ensure they can be provided in a manner that reflects the needs of British Columbians. The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation provides a variety of options to citizens for accessing information, assistance and services. These include: online, telephone, face-to-face, after-hours access for urgent needs; outreach and integration services provided by specialized staff; trusted third party partners; and mail, fax and to a limited degree, email.

Service delivery changes include providing more consistent and responsive service and more choices on how people access those services. To make it easier for people to access in-person service, the ministry is now co-located with 33 Service BC offices around the province. Access has been expanded and modernized through enhancements to the ministry's toll free phone number and the development of My Self Serve – an online portal. Further, the ministry has dedicated Outreach and Integration staff who focus on connecting B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens with financial assistance and community supports.

The new Greater Victoria Service BC centre provides in-person, front-counter service for B.C.'s Vital Statistics Agency, the Residential Tenancy Branch and the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation. For clients who are hard of hearing, hearing loop technology will be available which automatically transmits words from Service BC staff directly to the clients' hearing aids.

Ensuring government buildings are accessible

Government's Barrier Free Accessibility Program includes a comprehensive field assessment of all government-owned buildings where the primary use is office, courthouse or health unit. Of the 89 active buildings in these categories, 80 satisfy basic criteria for barrier free access. Several of the remaining nine buildings which do not meet the standard have heritage constraints, but the remainder will be retrofitted by fiscal year 2019.



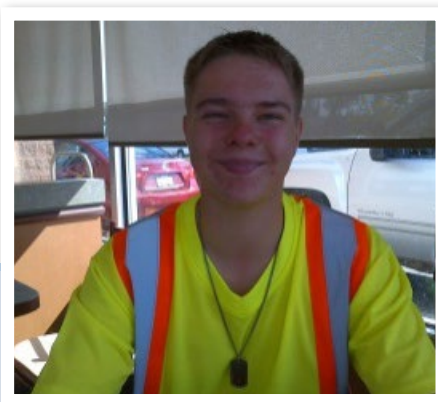
Accessible ramp at 940 Blanshard

Accessibility was also taken into consideration as part of government's 2015 capital plan to ensure that accessibility features are incorporated into building renewal and life extension programs.

Providing navigator supports for a smoother transition

In 2013, government launched Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) to provide youth and their families a better transition experience as they navigate the range of available services. STADD has four sites (Nanaimo, Kamloops, Surrey and Prince George) and has recently begun the expansion of the Surrey site into other parts of the Fraser Region. STADD is also working on new ways to support those in rural and remote areas through virtual navigation services.

Austin



Government Connections

STADD Navigators Help Austin Gain Independence

Austin finished high school in the summer of 2014 and his mother Laura's anxiety was growing. Austin had been diagnosed as having a developmental disability and he and his family didn't know what supports were available to him beyond high school. A STADD Navigator helped the family plan for the future and access various services and supports, including getting his PWD designation. Today Austin is enrolled in a program at his local college that is preparing him for work as a heavy equipment operator. He is managing his own money and doing various activities, including going to school, the college swimming pool and the gym, on his own. His parents are proud of Austin and how independent he has become.

Access to justice is a priority

Access to justice is an important principle that applies across the justice system. In order to accommodate justice system participants, upon request the Court Services Branch provides visual language interpreters at no cost for all levels of court and proceedings in British Columbia, including both criminal and civil trials and for jurors in the Supreme Courts. Visual language interpreters include sign language, tactile, oral and deaf interpreters. Arrangement can be made by contacting the interpreter clerk at the local court registry.

For late-deafened and hard of hearing individuals, Court Services also provides captioning services (Communication Access Realtime Translation or CART) which is instant, voice-to-text translation for every type of court proceeding in British Columbia, including criminal and civil. CART captioners are specially trained certified shorthand writers who, at well over 200 words per minute, keep up with what is being said. The individual who has hearing loss instantly reads on a monitor the text of every word spoken, as it's spoken. The service provider can be present on site or deliver remote captioning via the Internet.

Additionally, t-coil technology, for individuals with hearing assistive devices, is available in some locations as well as amplified headphones linked into the digital audio recording system. There is no cost to the user for any of these services which are available upon request.

All B.C. courthouse facilities planning incorporates accessibility features, including walks and curbs up to buildings, ramps and entrances into buildings, barrier free parking, barrier free washrooms, access to public phones and counters, access to upper floors (elevator or lift) and wide doorways.

Government is also developing a Capital Asset Management Plan which will provide a comprehensive assessment of Court facilities throughout the province. Assessments will include accessibility. When completed in the spring of 2017, a summary of findings and action plan to address accessibility deficiencies will be developed.

A high number of offenders in downtown Vancouver have health and social problems, including alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, homelessness and poverty. The Downtown Community Court takes a partnership-based, problem-solving approach to address offenders' needs and circumstances and the underlying causes of their criminal behaviour.

Supporting the vision for a violence free BC

People with disabilities have an increased vulnerability for experiencing domestic violence. B.C.'s three-year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan 2014 includes a commitment by the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV) to foster research and knowledge transfer to strengthen the response to domestic violence. PODV is working with a number of academic institutions and provides opportunities for graduate student researchers on a number of projects and initiatives.

With support from PODV, a graduate student from the University of Victoria worked with service providers in B.C. to look at the impact of domestic violence on women with disabilities, national and international promising or best practices, which jurisdictions are leading in terms of best practices, and how B.C. fares by comparison. The results of the research will inform PODV as it provides advice and leadership to cross-ministry and community partners about existing gaps in services for women with disabilities who are experiencing domestic violence and potential options to address them.

Through a one-time funding grant of \$27,168 to the Disability Alliance BC, government supported "Right to be Safe: Creating Inclusive Services for Women with Disabilities Experiencing Violence". This project delivered training to frontline service providers in five regions outside the Lower Mainland including Kootenays, North Okanagan, Cariboo Chilcotin, Northern BC and Vancouver Island. The training used a disability lens to examine the barriers for women with disabilities in accessing services, and increased the capacity of frontline service providers to develop and implement accessible and inclusive community strategies, interventions and support for women with disabilities who are victims of violence.

Accessible Internet

Improving Internet access province-wide

As of April 2016, nearly \$7 million in grants were issued for 17 high-speed Internet projects funded through the province-wide Connecting British Columbia grant program, administered by Northern Development Initiative Trust. Connecting British Columbia will benefit more than 150 B.C. locales situated in rural areas of the province by improving access to high-speed Internet.

On track for greater accessibility by end of 2016

Government is on track for ensuring gov.bc.ca meets international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines [WCAG 2.0 (AA)] standard by December 2016.

The federal government is also on track to bring Video Relay Service to Canadians by the end of 2016. Video Relay Service allows deaf, hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired individuals to communicate over video telephones and similar technologies with hearing people in real time, via a sign language interpreter.

Government Connections

Empowering youth in and from government care in BC

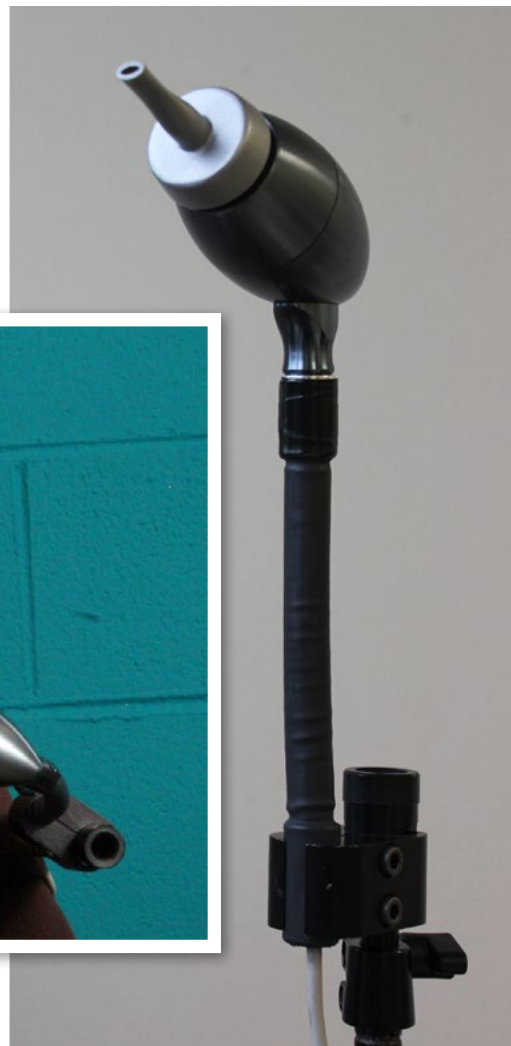
AGEDOUT

AgedOut.com Helps Youth in Care Transition

The Ministry for Children and Family Development and the Adoptive Families Association of BC, along with young adults from care, developed an innovative web based, mobile-friendly, culturally agile, interactive resource for aging out of BC government care. AgedOut.com does not replace a supportive adult in a young person's life, it provides available-anywhere, anytime technology, and information to support their transition. It allows for the collection of badges and rewards, so young people learn life skills information on the website, and are rewarded with gift certificates to use in their community.

Several web content solutions were used including text-to-speech technology called Read Speaker, having an online navigator that youth can talk to using PHP Live! software, and developing several audible learning modules using Articulate E-Learning software.

Photo Credit:
Neil Squire Society



Community in Action

In April, 2016 the Neil Squire Society received a Google grant for \$800,000 U.S. through Google Impact Challenge: Disabilities to support the release of LipSync, a mouth controlled input device enabling people with limited or no use of their arms to operate a mobile device. The funding will enable Neil Squire to move LipSync from prototype into the lives of people with disabilities. The LipSync designs will be released open source, making it an affordable option that can be customized to the specific needs of people with disabilities worldwide.

Accessible Built Environment

Supporting accessible communities

Working with the Union of BC Municipalities, government refreshed the *Planning for the Future: Age-friendly and Disability-friendly Official Community Plans* guidebook. This guidebook, which includes examples from local governments around the province, is designed to support local governments in making their Official Community Plans more accessible and inclusive.

Updating the building code

The 2015 National Building Code includes new accessibility provisions and B.C. is now reviewing B.C.'s accessibility provisions in the BC Building Code, to allow for and to foster further Code development.

Creating inclusion through technology

Government has launched a multi-year #BCTECH Strategy that will support growth of B.C.'s vibrant technology sector and strengthen British Columbia's diverse knowledge-based economy. Many B.C. technology initiatives such as CanAssist, Neil Squire Society, Snugvest, Sidestix, Shailah Interactive and the Victoria Hand Project are focused on developing solutions that would result in greater independence and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Community in Action

Kamloops Access and Inclusion Policy project

Kamloops is developing a policy to support ongoing improvements and resources for access and inclusion in the community.

- ▶ Builds on previous work, including Measuring Up, an access initiative report produced by Canadian Barrier Free Design, and the Kamloops Age-Friendly Community Plan

▶ Successes to date include:

- accessible playground equipment at both Riverside Park and Prince Charles Park
- wider curb cuts and improved connectivity at intersections
- audible crosswalks at major intersections downtown
- one-stop access to accessibility information on the city website



Measuring Up Committee Members

*(Left to Right – Top
Row): Ron Bergen,
Ken Inaba, Nate
Toevs, Janice Huber,
Kimberly Ranger Wood,
Tariq Mehboob.*

*(Left to Right – Bottom
Row): Kerri Christensen,
Kim Rose, Tara Roberts,
Glenda Watson-Hyatt,
Marco Pasqua*

*Absent: Stan Leyenhorst,
Coreen Windbiel, Pete
Hohmann, Anu Pala*

Photo: City of Surrey

Community in Action

City of Surrey – Committed to Disability Confidence

The City of Surrey is focused on attracting, hiring and promoting a diverse workforce that includes individuals with disabilities.

- ▶ Surrey has partnered with Abilities in Mind to increase capacity to build an inclusive workplace culture.
- ▶ In October 2015, the City of Surrey hosted and was honoured at the 2nd Annual Innovative Labour Solutions Awards in the “Large Business” category.
- ▶ Twenty-one Surrey facilities were audited and reviewed for accessibility, with additional facilities to receive new accessibility audits in 2016.
- ▶ The City provides training for Emergency Social Services staff and volunteers to understand the support needs of individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ Surrey’s Measuring Up Committee is a network of community leaders that have a commitment to increasing accessibility, employment, recreation, literacy and volunteerism for people with a disability.



*SideStix™ on the
West Coast Trail*

Photo: Kerith Perreur-Lloyd

Business Matters

SideStix™ Open Up a World of Possibilities

At age 13, Sarah Doherty lost her leg to a drunk driver. However, she didn't let this slow her down and she continued to remain active and adventurous for many years. Unfortunately, commercially available crutches were causing secondary injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome and frozen shoulder. She didn't want to lose her mobility, so together with her husband Kerith Perreur-Lloyd they created SideStix™, the first and only shock absorbent crutch with attachable tips for navigating any kind of terrain.

Using state of the art materials such as carbon fibre and aircraft aluminum, each pair of SideStix™ is custom built for the client, providing a perfect fit. Research carried out at UBC-ICORD and the University of Toronto has demonstrated 17 per cent reductions in the braking force and an eight per cent energy return provided by the patent pending shock absorber.

Produced in Sechelt B.C. by SideStix Ventures Inc., SideStix™ are a made-in-BC solution that improves lives around the world.

Accessible Housing

Benefits of a flexible, adaptable approach to housing

Over the next 30 years, demographics indicate that British Columbia's population will need more housing units built to accommodate seniors and people with disabilities. A number of municipalities across British Columbia are seeing an interest in redevelopment of single-family sites to multi-family housing, particularly for seniors and people with disabilities.

Adaptable housing provides options to accommodate seniors, and others, so they may stay in their homes through illness, injury, and aging. For municipalities looking to increase their adaptable housing stock, the BC Building Code provides adaptable housing guidelines for single-storey, multi-unit housing.

Adaptable housing requirements are features that relate to building access, doors and doorways, manoeuvring space, corridor widths, threshold heights, heights of switches and outlets, and bathroom layouts and functionality. There is a perception that building adaptable housing comes with additional costs. In British Columbia, we need to balance housing affordability with investing in more accessible and adaptable housing that will be cost-effective over the long term. It is more cost-effective to include adaptable housing features at the design stage than try and retro-fit at a later date.

The Province introduced the *Building Act* in Spring 2015 with an objective to bring greater consistency to technical building requirements in the province. The Province is committed to balancing consistency with flexibility to address specific local needs and will continue to work with local governments to meet both *Building Act* and Accessibility 2024 commitments.

Supporting inclusive, independent living

The Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI) program provides financial assistance to help eligible low-income seniors and people with disabilities with home modifications for accessible, safe and independent living in British Columbia. To date, more than 1,600 households have received assistance through the HAFI program.

The Home Renovation Tax Credit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities assists eligible individuals age 65 and over and persons with disabilities with the cost of certain permanent home renovations to improve accessibility or be more functional

or mobile at home. The program, which started in April 2012, has been expanded to include individuals who may be eligible to claim the disability tax credit and to family members living with those individuals.

The Health Authorities in B.C. provide home support services and clinical case management services, for people with severe mental health and substance use disorders, in supported housing units that are affordable, safe, and permanent. In September 2015, there were 6,143 Supported Housing units, including:

- Mental Health Supported Housing
- Assertive Community Treatment/Intensive Case Management Team Rental Subsidies
- Substance Use Supported Housing (adult and youth)
- Low-barrier housing

Government is renovating and restoring 13 provincially-owned single room occupancy hotels in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The four buildings: Hotel Maple (Formerly Washington Hotel), Hotel Irving (Formerly Sunrise), Hazelwood, and Hotel Canada (formerly Marble Arch), are designated accessible buildings, and design and construction provisions have been made for residents in rooms and common areas.

Encouraging housing partnerships

Through initiatives such as BC Housing's Community Partner Initiative, BC Housing partners with non-profits and other community groups to make housing more affordable for residents of B.C. who are in greatest need. The CPI program encourages greater flexibility and innovation when forming housing partnerships to help more people find self-sustaining affordable housing.

Working with partners to find 'The Right Fit'

Government is working with a number of organizations to develop a pilot project – 'The Right Fit: Facilitating Occupancy of Wheelchair Accessible Housing by People with Disabilities'. The pilot will design and test a new strategy to improve and streamline the current patchwork of processes for people with disabilities seeking appropriate housing and support services that meet their individual needs. The pilot project team currently includes; the City of Vancouver Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Disability Alliance BC, BC Housing, Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation, a not for profit Regional Government housing provider, the City of Vancouver, Individualized

Funding Resource Centre Society, and Vancouver Coastal Health. The pilot will be conducted in Metro Vancouver, and it is anticipated it will be carried out over a three year period. The aim of the project is to apply the learnings and improved processes provincially. The project team are also investigating the development of a centralized housing registry for wheelchair accessible units.

Delivering affordable, accessible housing



Accessible rooftop garden at Linden Tree Place



Qualicum Park Village

With the certification of the first 40 units, the first phase of the SAFERhome Universal Design Housing Pilot Project is now complete. The pilot incorporates 19-point universal design standards during construction, providing buyers a real housing choice that easily adapts to changing needs without incurring any or much additional cost to retrofit the home. A full report on the pilot project will be provided after 156 homes have been certified.

There are a number of new, affordable housing projects for seniors and people with disabilities in B.C, including:

- 47 one-bedroom and six two-bedroom apartments for seniors at Little Mountain in Vancouver, including an amenity room, community garden, patio space, a bicycle and scooter storage room and a low-cost food program for residents
- Upcoming Phase 2 of Apple Valley in Kelowna, featuring 78 rental apartments for seniors
- \$1.9 million for renovations to 74 units for seniors at Creekside Village in Vernon
- The Boulevard, a 10-bed licensed care home for individuals with mental-health challenges on Vancouver's North Shore
- Qualicum Park Village, 34 beautiful town homes configured in duplex and triplex buildings for families and seniors

Linden Tree Place, a fully accessible 30-unit affordable housing option operated by Kitsilano Neighbourhood House

Government Connections

Alexander Street Community Project

The Alexander Street Community project, a partnership between BC Housing, Portland Hotel Community Services Society and Vancouver Coastal Health, provides 139 housing units to those who are homeless, or most at risk of homelessness. More than eight per cent of the housing units are fully wheelchair accessible. Almost a third are designed for residents who experience mental illness and/or severe addiction and include a unique model of care and support which focuses on rehabilitation and recovery. Large, accessible planters for urban agriculture are included as part of the outdoor amenity area. As of December 31, 2015 the majority of tenants (more than 110) have remained living in this project for between 12 and 23 months.

Accessible Transportation

Accessible transportation is a priority

Accessibility was identified as a priority in *B.C. on the Move: A 10-Year Transportation Plan*, which recognizes that planning and designing transportation infrastructure that all British Columbians can access without impediment is essential.

Making transit more accessible

BC Transit is leading the way with fully accessible bus fleets for wheelchairs and strollers. BC Transit has also implemented a Calling Out Stops policy, which requires drivers within BC Transit systems to clearly and audibly call out stop information for passengers. The Victoria Regional Transit System now uses automated stop announcements on all buses.

As Metro Vancouver's regional transportation authority, TransLink is committed to providing a universally accessible transit system and is working to ensure that the closure of fare gates at SkyTrain stations and SeaBus terminals does not alter customers' ability to access transit independently. It is recognized and understood that everyone has vastly differing accessibility needs, and it is through direct communications with impacted customers that the best solution for fare gate accessibility can be pursued.

TransLink has recently reached out to customers, through various disability organizations, in order to gain feedback from individuals who are unable to tap a Compass Card. The information gathered from these customers, regarding their specific challenges and use of adaptive aids, has been and will continue to be referenced when determining fare gate accessibility solutions. Many of these customers have also agreed to act as pilot testers, and will be called upon for feedback as TransLink progresses to implementing a permanent solution for full fare gate accessibility.

To ensure that BC Bus Pass holders continue to have equal access to transit systems across the province, Government has worked closely with its partners at BC Transit and TransLink to provide Compass Cards to all BC Bus Pass holders. There are about 100,000 people who have a subsidized BC Bus Pass and almost 80 per cent of them live within the TransLink service area and are using the Compass Card. By providing Compass Cards to the remaining 18,000 low-income seniors and people receiving disability assistance who live outside Metro Vancouver, everyone will retain access to their local BC Transit system and have access to the SkyTrain, SeaBus, and TransLink buses.

Improving accessibility on BC Ferries

BC Ferries continues to improve accessibility and service for people with disabilities. To assist customers with hearing impairments, BC Ferries has installed an induction loop hearing system on the Queen of Oak Bay. Audio induction loop systems will be the new standard for the fleet going forward; they provide assistive listening to hearing aid users.



Queen of Oak Bay Ferry

Three new intermediate (Salish) class ferries, scheduled for use in 2016/17, will include accessible washrooms on the vehicle decks, elevator access from the vehicle decks to the lounge deck and sun deck, an induction loop hearing system and an increased number of wheelchair accessible spaces in general lounges and food service areas. Upgrades to existing Spirit class vessels scheduled for 2017/18 will include improved washroom and elevator safety features, the installation of an induction loop hearing system and new emergency safety systems suitable for passengers with disabilities.

Listening to the disability community

TI Corp, the Crown corporation responsible for toll operations on the Port Mann Bridge, is early in the process of taking another look at their exemption policy for people with disabilities, particularly around the tolls parents pay while driving a child with a disability across the Port Mann Bridge. As part of this review, they will be talking with customers to get their feedback.

Making small changes for greater inclusion

The 2015/16 Transit Minor Betterments Program improved transit accessibility in 11 B.C. communities including the Sunshine Coast, the Victoria Region, the Cowichan Valley, the Kootenays, Kelowna, Prince George, and the Highway 16 corridor. Projects included extending and paving bus pullouts, upgrading sidewalks and access paths, and installing shelters. This annual program, led by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, provides \$1 million each year to improve access and increase safety for transit users in communities across B.C.

Expanding options with more accessible taxis

There are now a minimum of 387 wheelchair accessible taxis approved to operate throughout the province, including three new wheelchair accessible taxis operating in the Capital Regional District. There are 133 wheelchair accessible taxis operated in the City of Vancouver and 182 are in other municipalities in Metro Vancouver. The Passenger Transportation Board also standardized licence conditions for taxis in Metro Vancouver to ensure that each licensee was required to dispatch wheelchair accessible taxis on a priority basis and to ensure the number of wheelchair accessible taxis in operation throughout a 24 hour day is at least proportional to the number of conventional taxis in operation.



Government Connections

BC Ferries partnered with the University of Victoria (UVic) Faculty of Engineering to improve accessibility. First year students worked in small teams and their projects were evaluated by judges from BC Ferries, the UVic Faculty of Engineering and representatives from local engineering and accessibility organizations. The winning projects included alternative transportation devices and a powered mover for wheelchairs.

"Working with the UVic students has provided BC Ferries with a fresh perspective on avenues we can pursue, whether it is acquiring new mobility aids, changing the process for our assistance program or implementing a technology solution."

– Corrine Storey, BC Ferries' Vice President of Customer Services

Community in Action

Motorcycle Permits for People with Disabilities

SPARC BC has created a Motorcycle Permit for people with disabilities. Over the years there have been a number of requests from permit holders. The requests often come in late May early June as the weather gets nicer and people start to look for opportunities and ways to fully engage in their communities. SPARC BC has received input from a number of permit holders and community partners, and has developed a sticker that can be placed on the windshields of motorcycles. These permits will be renewed annually for valid permit holders. It is expected that the permit holder will be required to carry their wallet cards to confirm that they are in fact the valid permit holder. Permit holders who drive a convertible can also request this permit. There is an annual processing fee of \$23 for this permit, which may be waived in cases of hardship. SPARC BC worked with the Accessibility Secretariat as well as permit holders to develop and refine the idea – what better way to enjoy beautiful B.C.! SPARC BC will be working with the other permit issuing agencies across the province to ensure that all eligible permit holders can have access to this permit if they need it. For more information, please email permits@sparc.bc.ca.



Income Support

Supporting greater financial independence through innovative policy reform

As of September 2015, B.C. became the first province to fully exempt child-support payments for families receiving income and disability assistance. This adds an additional \$13 million in income each year to more than 3,300 families on assistance.

With the full rollout of the Annualized Earnings Exemption (AEE) in January 2015, B.C. became the first province in Canada to allow people receiving disability assistance to calculate their earnings on an annual basis instead of monthly to provide flexibility for people whose ability to work can fluctuate throughout the year. In the 2015/16 fiscal year, people receiving disability assistance earned almost \$92 million in income that they can keep in addition to their assistance – an increase of 15 per cent since AEE was launched. One in five people receiving disability assistance are now working.

Some feedback on the increase in asset limits

- ▶ *"This increase will have a positive impact on many of the current and future clients we serve and is a change our community is very pleased to see. Allowing people to keep their inheritances, cash settlements and/or gifts, often the only extraneous income they will ever receive, will improve their lifelong outcomes and quality of life."* – Kelly Newhook, Executive Director, TAPS
- ▶ *"A big thank-you on behalf of the folks we support. It's another very important step in the right direction – so much appreciated!"*
– Richard Faucher, Burnaby Association for Community Living
- ▶ *"I applaud you and personally appreciate your move to lift the gift exemption and the asset limit. Kudos!"* – Thad
- ▶ *"Kudos to you and the Ministry on this very monumental day. This is a historical development and one that will be of great benefit to British Colombian's with disabilities."* – Ken

Asset limits for people on disability assistance were increased from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for a single person and from \$10,000 to \$200,000 for a family where two people have the Persons with Disabilities designation. People on disability assistance can also receive cash gifts or inheritances with no impact on their assistance, provided they remain within the asset limit. This means that families can now leave an inheritance to their children, knowing that the money will be there to support them when they need it.

Providing more support and choice

Government will invest \$170 million over the next three years to increase disability assistance rates and extend transportation supports to all Persons with Disability (PWD) clients – providing extra support to 100,000 people in British Columbia. The increase provides equity in the system and more choice for people on disability assistance.

Streamlining access to disability assistance

The *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, tabled Spring 2016 and which received support from all members of the Legislature, will make it easier for some people with disabilities to access disability assistances, particularly those youth transitioning to Community Living BC.

B.C. responded to requests from stakeholders during the Accessibility 2024 consultation to review the lifetime ban for clients who have committed fraud, and this has now been repealed.

Employment

Supporting employment with access to assistive technology

Government is investing \$9 million over three years in the Technology@Work program, launched in May 2015 and operated by the Neil Squire Society, which has provided over 186 individuals with assistive technology products or services to overcome work and volunteer related barriers. As of the Quarterly report March 31, 2016:

- 674 client applications received
- 267 clients currently in Needs Determination
- 186 completed agreements
- \$1,204,639 in assistive technology expenditures
- 298 Employers helped through the Resource Centre

Government Connections

Technology@Work is working

Annie has a progressive hereditary eye condition, hearing loss in one ear and frequent headaches. She has worked for the past eight years as a product food demonstrator – a job that requires preparing and cooking food, reading labels, engaging with customers, and writing reports on customer satisfaction. She was facing some disability-related barriers in her work, and contacted the Technology@Work program to see if they could help.

After receiving a Needs Determination Assessment from the Technology@Work team, Annie was referred to CNIB for a Low Vision Assessment to determine the most suitable products for her to use in her specific workplace. It was recommended that Annie receive a portable video magnifier, Solar Shades for interior use and Solar Shades for exterior use, all of which was provided by Technology@Work. CNIB also recommended magnifying spectacles which Annie purchased as part of her contribution to the Technology@Work process.

Exploring career options early

The Ministry of Education has revised the K-12 career education curriculum to provide more opportunities for students to explore a variety of career options for their future. The Shoulder Tapper program which provides work experience for students has also been expanded to all school districts in the province, with students with a disability identified as a focus.

Engaging the business community

The Presidents Group is actively encouraging employers in a number of different sectors to hire more people with disabilities. Employers are working with the Presidents Group to share their collective learning on the recruitment, hiring and retention of employees with disabilities with other employers. The Presidents Group is working towards developing mechanisms and standards that are effective for employers to hire more persons with disabilities.

Employment Matters

Community Partnership Leads to Jobs at Vancity

In 2015, Vancity identified a specific business need within their enterprise-wide information technology upgrade project that aligned with the skill sets of people on the Autism Spectrum. In response, Vancity partnered with BC Centre for Abilities and engaged in a process to hire eight people through Focus Professional Services, an organization that specializes in matching candidates on the Autism Spectrum with IT roles. During this process, Vancity learned the value of connecting with on-the-ground partners in the disability community. These connections greatly increased the potential for success and positive outcomes in the process of hiring and retaining employees with disabilities.

Since they were hired in December 2015, Jason Yeh, Data Quality manager has observed, *"As staff are becoming more educated and informed about people with a disability from working with and being around them, we've stopped to using the "D" word (disability) and just focus on (their) potential and capabilities."*

Investing in innovative post-secondary training

In 2014 a pilot program was launched to implement innovative post-secondary training aimed at increasing the success of people with disabilities in trades, technical and high-demand market programs. Since then, more than \$4 million has been invested in disability awareness training for staff and faculty, incorporating universal design principles into curriculum, and developing pilot courses specifically for persons with disabilities. Highlights include:

- ▶ North Island College Employment Transition and Construction Labourer Program that allows students with disabilities to acquire employment skills and entry level construction skills
- ▶ College of the Rockies Retention Alert Pilot Project for persons with disabilities in trades and vocational programs, providing a safety net of supports for students with disabilities; and,
- ▶ Northern Lights College Industry Mentorship Program, a peer mentor program for trades and technical students with disabilities.

WorkBC Employment Services Centres are making a difference

Now in its fifth year, the Employment Program of BC continues to provide services to unemployed British Columbians who are looking for work, including people with disabilities. As of March 31 2016, case management services have been provided to over 71,818 clients with disabilities, with almost 30 per cent successfully finding employment or a volunteer opportunity. More than \$164 million has been invested to support employment services for clients with disabilities in the first four years of the program.

Government, in collaboration with Community Living BC, is also providing sector training to WorkBC Employment Services Centre staff focused on delivering services to people with complex, multiple disabilities. Government also partnered with WorkBC service delivery partners and held a series of capacity building seminars to improve services and share best practices in the community through online webinars, including a Douglas College accredited certificate course on Customized Employment Development for clients with disabilities and the Disability Related Employment Needs Assessment hosted by the Centre for Employment Excellence.

Community in Action

Workforce Innovation Pilot Project

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence has a \$637,650, three-year pilot project underway that takes a business 'demand-based' approach to facilitating the hiring of people with disabilities. This innovative initiative is designed to meet the dual objectives of supporting the workforce needs of BC businesses and improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities. The project works directly with BC employers in specific industry sectors with high employment demand to match them with candidates who have the qualities, skill set, career interest and capabilities to do the job.

Providing options through supported employment, education and mentorship

Health authorities provide a range of employment supports for mental health and substance use clients including pre-employment supports, therapeutic work contracts, transitional employment and supports for competitive employment. During 2014–15, health authorities had a total of 2,745 participants in supported employment programs and 782 participants (28 per cent) obtained or maintained their employment.

Health authorities also provide supported education programs for mental health and substance use clients including career planning, academic survival skill building, and connection to supports. In 2014–15, 2,236 people participated in supported education programs, and 375 participants (17 per cent) either obtained or maintained their education with these supports.

Government is providing \$892,000 over three years to Connectra Society to research the use of volunteer mentors to help people with disabilities become job-ready.

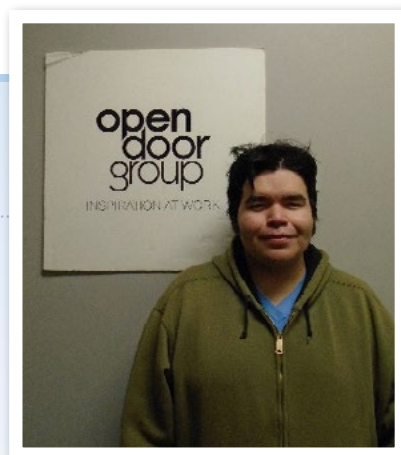
Recognizing inclusive employees and employers

Province-wide, events and activities were held to celebrate the successes of people with disabilities in the workplace and connect with more employers during the second annual Disability Employment Month in September 2015.

Government Connections

Supporting James in Pursuing his Dreams

James, 22, recently completed the Kitchen Assistant Program at Thompson River University as part of the case management supports he received from the WorkBC Employment Services Centre Open Door Group in Kamloops. James, who has speech and communication challenges, memory and cognitive difficulties, now has a part-time job as a dishwasher at White Spot, working every Sunday. He is intrigued by Japanese culture and he hopes to find another part-time job as a dishwasher at a Japanese restaurant. His long term goal is to pursue Japanese language training at university.



Community in Action

Inclusion in the Workplace

Trevor Borland, Owner at Pacific Bolt Manufacturing in BC, recently hired Jamie, a young man with an intellectual disability as a facilities technician, responsible for sorting, packaging and general janitorial duties. He was hired through Ready, Willing and Able, a national initiative designed to increase the labour force participation of people with intellectual disabilities and autism. Initially, there were some concerns among the team about cost, safety, and productivity, but his supervisor uses cue cards to provide Jamie with clear instructions on his tasks. The end result is an extremely loyal employee who enjoys his job and wants to work.

"He never misses a day and he's never late," says Borland, "In this environment, where sometimes we have people who don't want to be here, it's nice to have an employee who wants to work and is happy to be at work."

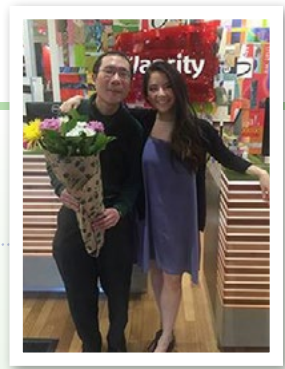
Ready, Willing and Able BC Stats (as of March 31, 2016) – 304 Employers Engaged. 56 BC Employers committed to hire. 95 Employment Outcomes. 60 Employment Agency partnerships.

Business Matters

Recognizing Outstanding Employees

In April 2016, Aaron Lee received the Outstanding Employee Award from Disability Alliance BC, which recognizes an outstanding employee with a disability who has exhibited exceptional skill or accomplishments in their work. Aaron is an administrator at Vancity's community branch in Port Coquitlam, and is part of Vancity's workplace inclusion program. He was nominated by his colleague Kathryn Hansen for his diligence and upbeat attitude. Aaron says he feels confident about the work he is doing and is pleased to have a permanent job with the local credit union.

Vancity's workplace inclusion program seeks to develop an inclusive culture that features an empathetic manager, a mentor and an on-site job coach from a community partner for as long as the employee needs it.



Community Action Employment Plan is Seeing Results

The Community Action Employment Plan (CAEP) was launched in March 2013 as part of Community Living BC's (CLBC) commitment to support more individuals with developmental disabilities in realizing their employment goals. It embeds an "employment first" culture in the work of CLBC and its contracted service providers, and builds capacity with individuals and families to find employment and to increase the number of employers who are hiring inclusively.

Over the last two years, countless partners have collaborated with CLBC to accomplish the goals of the CAEP, including supporting the goals of youth with developmental disabilities who want to work, increased engagement with businesses, and improved support services in cities and rural communities.

As of March 2016, more than 3,700 people served by CLBC are reporting employment income – a very positive indicator of the momentum that is making B.C. a leader in inclusive employment. While progress has been marked, much remains to be accomplished. CLBC has renewed its commitment to CAEP and will be launching a new set of initiatives in 2016-17.

Financial Security

Celebrating successes and raising awareness of RDSPs

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) Action Group has worked diligently to develop strategies and tools to grow RDSP uptake and help to increase financial security for persons with disabilities and their families in British Columbia.

Over 22,500 people now have RDSPs in B.C. and the value of those RDSPs is \$460 million, up \$140 million since June 2014.

In October 2016, B.C. will mark the third annual RDSP Awareness Month. Events around the province will help to raise awareness among people with disabilities, their families and friends about the benefits of RDSPs as a tool to save for the future. To support this, information about RDSPs is available from B.C. government offices around the province.

Making it easier to start an RDSP

The RDSP Action Group released a step-by-step guide on *How to Start and Manage a Registered Disability Savings Plan in B.C.* during the second annual RDSP Awareness Month in October 2015, which is being distributed online at gov.bc.ca/accessibility and through disability organizations province-wide.

Working to protect RDSPs from seizure by creditors

The Ministry of Justice is working on a project to repeal the *Court Order Enforcement Act* and replace it with legislation based upon draft legislation prepared by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada and revised by the British Columbia Law Institute. Currently similar legislation is in force in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador. The protection of RDSPs from seizure by creditors will be addressed as part of this larger project.

Community in Action

Tax AID DABC

Andy is a 27 year old man who has received disability assistance since he was 18 but had never received any guidance about how to file a tax return. He knew generally that he was missing out on benefits like the GST credit but he never realized that over the course of 10 years he was missing out on thousands of dollars of income tax benefits. With the help of Tax Assistance and Information for People with Disabilities (Tax AID DABC), a program run by Disability Alliance BC, Andy was able to get his tax slips and file 10 years of taxes. He says he hopes the money he gets back will help him move from Surrey to Vancouver to be closer to his friends.

Tax AID DABC assists people in B.C. receiving disability assistance get caught up on income tax filing from previous years. Between July 15, 2015 and April 30 2016, Tax AID DABC helped file 539 years of taxes for 193 clients which will result in estimated \$350,000 additional money and benefits for those individuals. They will also enjoy greater access to other programs which require up to date income tax filing including Registered Disability Savings Plan grants and bonds, subsidized housing programs, and MSP premium assistance.

"People receiving provincial disability assistance who do not regularly file their income taxes are missing out on hundreds or even thousands of dollars in tax credits. Our Tax AID DABC staff work with individuals to help them get caught up on their tax filing and start to realize the financial benefits of regular tax filing." – Jane Dyson, Executive Director, Disability Alliance BC

Government Connections

A Guide to Starting and Managing your RDSP

A new guide to the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) was released in October 2015 by the RDSP Action Group to help more British Columbians with disabilities and their families benefit from this long-term-savings plan designed by the Government of Canada.

How to Start and Manage an RDSP in British Columbia outlines key steps to setting up an RDSP, like applying for the Disability Tax Credit, filing income tax and choosing a financial institution. It also shares stories and advice from British Columbians about the impact of an RDSP on their lives.

People under age 50 who have disabilities may be able to get up to \$90,000 in grants and bonds over a lifetime if they open an RDSP.



Inclusive Communities

Creating a legacy from the 2015 Canada Winter Games

The Northern Sport Accessibility 2015 Initiative is already delivering a number of benefits to communities in the north, including:

- ▶ More than 10 Community “Try-It!” events for wheelchair and/or adaptive sport including: wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, para-badminton, sledge hockey, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair curling and para-table tennis
- ▶ “XploreSportz Wheelchair Sports” Camp in Fort St. John which gave children the opportunity to participate in six different wheelchair and/or adaptive sports over the course of a five-day camp
- ▶ 14 Run-Jump-Throw-Wheel and High Five training sessions for more than 85 participants in more than 10 communities (Prince George, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Hazelton, Skidegate, Dease Lake, Kwadacha, Fort St. James, Terrace, Tl’azten and Prince Rupert)
- ▶ Eight “Families in Motion” sessions with over 200 participants in Fort St. John and Taylor
- ▶ The first-ever northern BC Para-athlete Performance and Development Camp

BC Para-athlete Performance and Development Camp



Photo: Pacific Sport Northern BC

Recognizing and building on successes

Government has declared November as Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month in recognition of the contributions of Aboriginal people living with disabilities in communities throughout B.C.

Building on the success of the Surrey School District disability sports pilot, sixteen communities are now participating in the After School Sports and Arts Initiative, providing sport and arts programming for children with disabilities.



Feedback on the After School Sports and Arts Initiative

"Students had the opportunity to develop friendships with other learners with special needs who were not in their classes and grades. This led to students looking for each other on the playground during recess and lunch – indicating their growing connections within the school community." – Vice Principal

"A student with limited verbal ability drew elaborate pictures that told stories of other worlds and flying superheroes. Whenever we did music, he was excited and enthusiastic to create spontaneous musical compositions that took the whole group on a journey of sound and emotion." – Program Leader

The Province has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with leading Canadian sports organizations focused on providing greater opportunities for athletes with a disability to prosper and reach Paralympic success, and for Canada to become a world-leading Paralympic nation.

Government has provided \$3 million towards an innovative, made-in-B.C. autism research project to explore the benefits of parent coaching intervention for infants and toddlers who show early signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Investing in accessible sports, arts and culture

Nine disability sport organizations are benefiting from over \$60,000 in provincial grants to host events, including the Canadian Championships for wheelchair basketball in Kamloops.

Over \$3 million in Community Gaming Grants went to disability groups in B.C. in 2015/16 to support sports, arts and culture, and to contribute to the quality of life in a community. (Full list: Appendix C)

Through the Federal/Provincial BC Sport Participation Program, which funds provincial, disability and community organizations to deliver new and or expanded sport participation opportunities, approximately \$100,000 was provided to support sport programming for persons with a disability.

Government provided \$400,000 to KidSport BC in order to help children and teens play sports. Several disability sport groups are among the organizations that KidSport supports.

Government Connections

Celebrating Paralympians

The Richmond Olympic Experience, which opened in November 2015, celebrates Paralympic athletes, including some from B.C., in exhibits through stories, artefacts, images and accessible sport simulators.



Photo: Richmond Olympic Experience

Making independence a priority

Ministry of Health has increased the hourly rates for clients in the Choice in Supports for Independent Living program, which helps those with significant disabilities better attract and retain support staff through competitive wages and increase the choice of care options. This allows clients to continue to self-manage their care and remain independent in their own homes or in the community for as long as possible.

The 2015 Scotiabank Giller Prize shortlist books are now available in accessible formats through the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS). B.C. supports NNELS through the BC Libraries Co-op, as well as through promotion and awareness

among the public library system, encouraging libraries to make materials available in accessible formats.

Dr. Jaimie Borisoff, a Canada Research Chair recognized for his work in rehabilitation engineering design at British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), was awarded \$131,000 through the British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund (BCKDF) for his project Accessible Technology for Mobility & Community Participation. This BCKDF funding further leveraged \$236,000 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and other sources, for a total investment of \$368,000 in research infrastructure for accessibility research at BCIT.

Supporting inclusive communities

Twenty-nine B.C. communities received age-friendly community planning and project grants totalling \$508,400 in 2016 to help support welcoming public spaces, accessible transportation, affordable housing options, social participation and volunteer opportunities as well as information and services that increase accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities in their communities. (Full list: Appendix B)

Community in Action

Revelstoke Accessibility 2016 and Beyond

In 2016, Revelstoke received an Age-Friendly BC grant for its proposal “Revelstoke Accessibility 2016 and Beyond”, which is being matched by businesses in the community, to purchase a number of colourful ramps as part of a “Community Ramp Project”, as well as an exercise program that helps prevent falls by improving balance and confidence. The city has received six Age-Friendly BC grants since 2007, which provided support to the revision of the Revelstoke Official Community in 2009 to include a goal promoting access to safe and affordable housing, physical and social mobility and social engagement in the community.



Photo: City of Revelstoke



Sledge Hockey



OneAbility Partners

Community in Action

OneAbility - Establishing Victoria as a Hub for Adapted Physical Activity

Victoria-based OneAbility is a collaboration of local, provincial and national leaders in adapted sport and recreation focused on increasing opportunities for accessible sport, recreation and active living for people of all abilities.

OneAbility is strengthening existing programs, introducing new ones where there are gaps, building capacity and raising awareness about the importance and availability of accessible recreation and sport. Recent highlights include the first Greater Victoria Parasport Development Week and Vancouver Island's first Sledge Hockey program. OneAbility is also contributing to research in adapted sport and the enhancement of athletic performance, as well as a more vibrant community for people of all abilities to engage in sport, physical activity and active living.

Partners includes Camosun College, the Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence, Recreation Integration Victoria, the University of Victoria (CanAssist, Vikes Athletics and Recreation and faculty from the School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education), Victoria Wheelchair Sports Club, and other adapted sport and recreation leaders.



Westminster Pier Park

Community in Action

New Westminster Wheelability Project

When the New Westminster Wheelability Project launched in 2009, the goal was to enhance transportation options for those who use a scooter, wheelchair, walker or other mobility aid to move around the city.

A walking assessment of street accessibility was undertaken, as well as an audit of gradient, curb cuts, permanent street furniture, pedestrian crossing times and other features. The audit team also did a survey of demographics, preferred travel routes, and built environment barriers. Two wheelability maps were created, one of Uptown and another of Downtown, that include the placement of accessible transit stops and washrooms, curb ramps, cross-slopes, and sidewalk gradients.

The project has left a legacy in New Westminster. Council and city staff are more aware of mobility challenges and many have become accessibility champions. Recommendations from this project have informed the City's Master Transportation Plan as well as has positive effects on budgets for accessibility projects, policies, practices, and design decisions related to wheelability.



COCO Café Team

Employment Matters

Award Winning COCO Café

Cedar Opportunities Co-operative (COCO) Café, opened in 2011, is a social enterprise that provides employment, training, and social opportunities for people with developmental disabilities within their community. COCO Café employs a staff of 35 people, 14 of whom have developmental disabilities.

In 2016, COCO has launched a new work experience program that provides training in a supported environment to help people with developmental disabilities develop transferable employment skills, resume building, and interview training skills that will open up future employment opportunities.

COCO Café was the winner of the 2015 Small Business BC award for Best Community Impact.

include(me!

let's talk about quality of life

Include Me!

Community Living BC (CLBC)

CLBC's Quality of Life Initiative – Include Me! – was developed and validated by Dr. Robert Schalock over a period of approximately 25 years. It is administered by individuals with developmental disabilities to gather the opinions of individuals being served by CLBC about their quality of life. It provides a common language and approach within the community living sector to talk with individuals about the things that are important to everyone and how we can collectively work together to improve their quality of life.

A number of interesting trends are emerging within the community living sector. For example, individuals provide the highest scores in the well-being domains (emotional, physical and material) while social inclusion, personal relationships and self-determination are the lowest scoring domains. As well, 81 per cent of individuals who report having a job that pays them money, say that their job makes their life better.

CLBC plans to expand the sampling across the province to help both CLBC and service providers better understand the impact of their work.





Building Accessibility Bettering Community

Community in Action

SPARC BC – Access Awareness Day Celebrations

June 4, 2016 marked SPARC BC's 19th annual Access Awareness Day! Access Awareness Day gives everyone an opportunity to look at their community and to think about what more can be done to make communities more accessible and inclusive for everyone. The theme for this year's Access Awareness Day was "Building Accessibility/Creating Community". As part of this year's planning, the goal was to draw attention to the needs of individuals with health and activity limitations living in communities and to highlight the different ways that we can all work together to ensure that communities are as accessible and inclusive as possible. Each year, as part of the annual Access Awareness Day campaign, many local governments show their support by passing a proclamation that recognizes the role that we all play in ensuring the rights of everyone to bring their talents, experience and abilities to engage in all aspects of community life. Participation by local governments in Access Awareness Day has doubled over the last five years with more than 40 communities participating in Access Awareness Day in 2015.



Emergency Preparedness

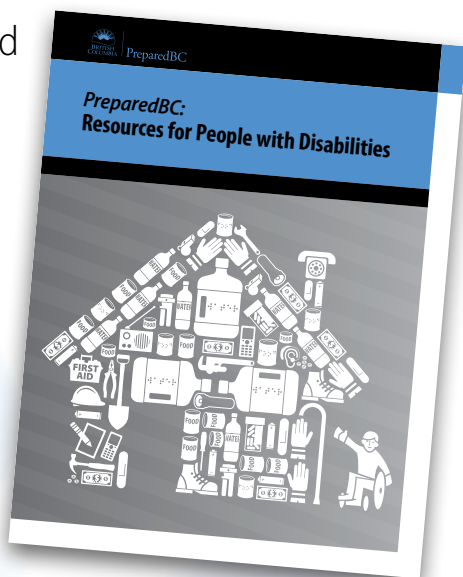
Providing emergency planning tools and resources

Government has developed some comprehensive emergency planning resources for persons with additional preparedness needs, including a comprehensive emergency planning guide for people with disabilities. The guide was developed in consultation with Disability Alliance BC, and includes their recommendations on personal emergency planning using the five categories of the functional needs, or G-MIST (Communication, Medical, Independence, Supervision and Transportation), framework.

The Province continues to take substantial steps to meet the recommendations of the March 2015 Earthquake Consultation Report and to work collaboratively to address the needs of people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations in the event of an earthquake.

Supporting inclusive emergency planning

Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is a leader in emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. With \$150,000 in funding from government, DABC will work, in a consulting capacity, with local authorities in different regions of B.C. to engage them in integrating the Functional Needs Framework into their emergency response plans and to ensure that the needs of community members with disabilities are accommodated. This will help meet the goal of ensuring that every community in B.C. has accommodated the needs of persons with disabilities in its emergency planning by 2024.



Protect Yourself During Earthquakes!



Graphic courtesy of the Earthquake Country Alliance

Consumer Experience

Making the outdoors more accessible

The Province has created a BC Parks Accessibility Advisory Committee to advise on how to improve the visitor experience for people with disabilities in BC Parks. The Committee includes cross-government representatives as well as members of the disability community.

Improving access to Visitor Services

To ensure Visitor Services are meeting the evolving expectations for accessibility of the travelling public, Destination BC will provide \$300,000 in funding through the application-based Visitor Services Innovation Fund in each of 2016/17 and 2017/18. Communities can apply for funds to support new or enhanced projects that will provide visitor services in a more accessible manner. Examples include enhanced wheelchair accessibility, TTY electronic communications, braille display boards and enhanced technology.

Upgrading rest stop accessibility

Government is incorporating feedback from stakeholders into updated Accessibility Guidelines to help improve rest stop accessibility. Multiple sites have seen accessibility improvements throughout 2015/16, including Baynes Sound on Hwy 19A; Kal Lake Lookout on Hwy 97; and Kennedy River on Hwy 4.



Nanoose Bay rest stop upgrades, HWY 19

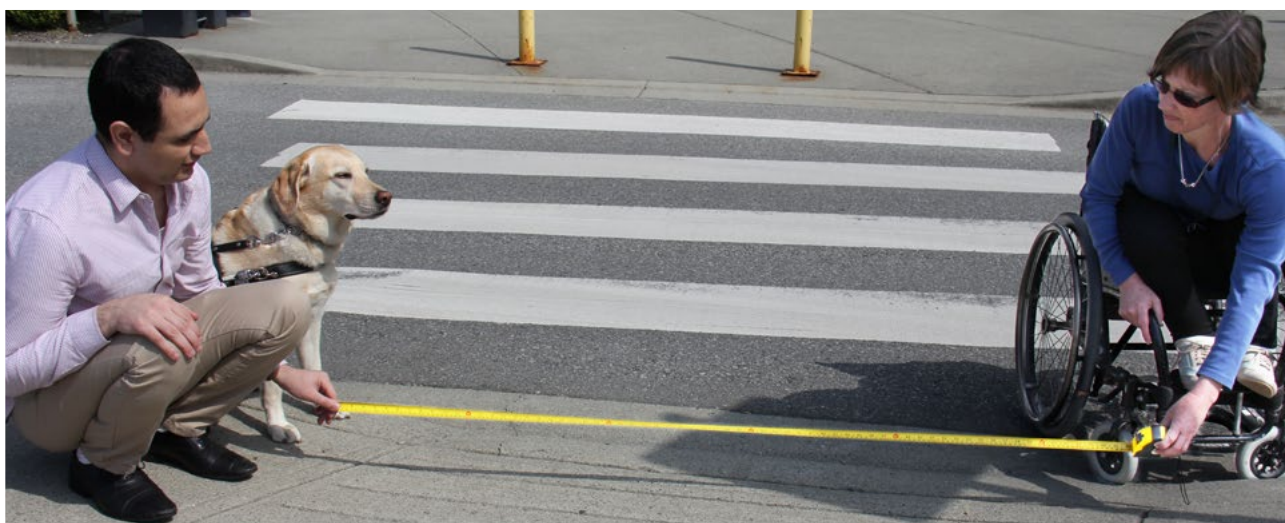
Supporting accessible tourism

Through the Resort Municipality Initiative, government invests \$10.5 million annually in 14 resort communities for projects that help support local tourism infrastructure, amenities and programs, including accessibility improvements. Through this initiative, the District of Tofino has built the Windy Hill Lookout, a wheelchair accessible lookout on Tofino's Main Street with views of Tofino's working harbour and Clayoquot Sound. (Full list: Appendix D)

Partnering with the Rick Hansen Foundation

To break down barriers to employment and the built environment for people with disabilities, the Rick Hansen Foundation partnered with the B.C. Government to develop the Increasing Accessibility in BC Job Creation Pilot Project. Seven people with disabilities were trained as Accessibility Specialists and they completed over 84 on-site accessibility evaluations in the Lower Mainland, including city halls, community centres, restaurants, hotels, and parks. Specialists identified barriers for those with mobility, vision, and hearing challenges, as well as common issues such as lack of accessible parking, inaccessible entrances and bathrooms, and lack of signage and way-finding. They provided simple, inexpensive solutions based on universal design principles that, in many cases, were easily incorporated by businesses.

Outcomes from the accessibility assessments include over 73 per cent of participating clients agreeing they would now be more willing to hire someone with a disability, a major local restaurant chain planning to adopt many of the recommendations, and incorporation of all recommendations at four participating WorkBC Employment Services Centres. Work is underway on plans for a further accessibility partnership in 2016–17.



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Business Matters

Vancouver International Airport – a Global Leader in Accessibility

Accessibility is a priority at Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Working with community and business partners, YVR has developed detailed travel guides to support customers preparing for air travel. They also host annual accessibility tours for individuals and families living with autism and for people using wheeled mobility devices. The programs are designed to help customers navigate the obstacles of travelling and develop a sense of familiarity around the airport experience. This focus on providing meaningful access for all is part of the reason why YVR has been named Best Airport in North America for an unprecedented seventh consecutive year at the Skytrax World Airport Awards.



TrailRider in Action

Government Connections

TrailRiders Open Up the Backcountry

A TrailRider is a unique single-tire wheelchair powered by volunteers that allows individuals living with physical disabilities to explore and enjoy the outdoors. The Strathcona Park TrailRider program, a partnership between BC Parks and the Strathcona Wilderness Institute, is focused on providing access to Strathcona Provincial Park, specifically the Forbidden Plateau area, through TrailRider dayhike adventures. The Battleship Lake trails now feature a boardwalk with custom aluminum on and off ramps, better access to lakeside viewpoints and a dock especially intended to provide an on the water experience for TrailRider visitors. In addition to the TrailRider program, Strathcona Park also features a number of accessible features, including a 2 km loop trail in Paradise Meadows, a Visitor Centre, and 'gravel-friendly' wheelchairs available free of charge.



Appendix A: Community and Employer Partnerships in Support of Accessibility

2016 Community and Employer Partnerships Supporting Accessibility

Community and Employer Partnerships have five active agreements aimed at enhancing services and improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities with a total value of \$2,839,136. For more information on Community and Employer Partnerships, visit: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Employment-Services/Community-Employer-Partnerships.aspx>

| Project Name | Description | Approved Funding |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| Employment Mentorship Support Project – Research and Innovation Project | <i>Between September 1, 2015 and August 31, 2018, ConnectTra will carry out a project titled Employment Mentorship Support Project. Through innovative research and case study this Project will focus on determining quantitatively and qualitatively whether the Employment Mentorship Support method constitutes an effective approach to improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities in British Columbia.</i> | \$ 892,047 |
| Community Engagement in Social Planning: Tapping the Groundswell – Job Creation Partnership | <i>Between November 9, 2015 and June 17, 2016, three EI eligible participants residing in the Powell River area will participate in 28 weeks of work experience and skill enhancement in research, community engagement, event planning, marketing and data analysis, increasing their opportunities for sustainable employment. A Social Planning Strategy will be created to guide the Powell River City Councillors and other community leaders in considering their diverse community when making planning decisions, including people with disabilities, aboriginal people, immigrants, youth and people with multiple barriers.</i> | \$51,011 |

| Project Name | Description | Approved Funding |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| Personal Income Information for Disabilities Assistance Recipients – Research and Innovation Project | <i>Between February 1, 2016 and January 31, 2019, the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation will carry out a pilot project to develop a state of the art income calculator website for Persons with Disabilities receiving disability assistance. The calculator, enhancements to information supports and training of case managers will improve access to accurate information for PWDs, including providing them with income estimations for specific job opportunities and a personal account where clients can track their earning exemption totals and see the effect of earnings on their disability assistance.</i> | \$696,820 |
| BC Partners Workforce Innovation Pilot Project – Research and Innovation Project | <i>Between March 16, 2015, and March 16, 2018, the BC Centre for Employment Excellence (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation) will carry out a pilot project to establish a centralized coordinator body within participating employer sectors that would facilitate the hiring of people with disabilities, from across all spectrums of ability and who are referred and supported by local disability-serving agencies and employment-ready agencies. The project will determine whether such a coordinated, demand-side focused approach is more effective at meeting the needs of employers and job seekers with disabilities.</i> | \$637,650 |
| Occupational Recovery after First-Episode Psychosis: A Critical Period – Research and Innovation Project | <i>Between March 1, 2015, and February 28, 2018, the Fraser Health Authority will use the Individual Placement Support model of treatment and assess the incremental effectiveness of this model when treating unemployed Early Psychosis Intervention clients. The intent is to enhance understanding of interventions related to employment success in a representative sample of clients with early psychosis.</i> | \$561,608 |

Appendix B: Age-friendly Planning and Project Grants

2016 Age-friendly Planning and Project Grants

The age-friendly community planning and project grant program is a partnership between the Government of British Columbia and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities. Each successful local government receives up to \$20,000 to help undertake a variety of activities - from setting public policy to delivering information and services – that address the needs of older residents.

For more information on age-friendly planning and project Grants, visit www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/seniors-housing-support-initiative.html

| Community | Application Description | Approved Grant |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 100 Mile House | <i>The district will consult and assess/explore options for seniors' housing and supports for aging in place. Work will include the development of a transportation action plan.</i> | \$7,000 |
| Burnaby | <i>The city will establish a dementia-friendly steering committee, host a workshop for key city staff and council members, and identify actions to help make Burnaby more dementia-friendly.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Burns Lake | <i>The village will integrate age-friendly policies into its revised and updated official community plan.</i> | \$15,000 |
| Campbell River | <i>The city will consult with the community through focus groups and surveys to create an age-friendly action plan.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Capital Regional District | <i>The Capital Region Housing Corporation will consult with low-income tenants, provide information on and referrals to programs and services in their neighbourhoods, and create a resource guide to link low-income seniors to community resources.</i> | \$20,000 |

| Community | Application Description | Approved Grant |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Central Okanagan Regional District | <i>The district will improve accessibility by identifying low-barrier trails and beaches in a resource booklet. As well, there will be a pilot project to put up signs identifying senior-friendly trails in six area parks. The district will also be widening, levelling and surfacing the Peninsula Trail at Kaloya Regional Park in Lake Country.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Chetwynd | <i>The district will host lunch and learn sessions covering topics such as nutrition, home and community safety, and resources for caregivers.</i> | \$13,100 |
| Columbia Shuswap Regional District | <i>An age-friendly assessment of South Shuswap Area C will be conducted in partnership with the South Shuswap Health Services Society.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Delta | <i>Delta will be undertaking a South Delta seniors bus pilot project to address transportation needs identified by older adults in Ladner and Tsawwassen.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Esquimalt | <i>The funding is for an age-friendly assessment on the status of seniors in Esquimalt, to develop recommended age-friendly goals, objectives, and policies for inclusion in the updated official community plan.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Islands Trust | <i>Outreach and consultation to explore the needs of Lasqueti Island seniors living at home and how they can be supported.</i> | \$9,465 |
| Kamloops | <i>Community members and local organizations will be engaged in the development of an inclusive accessibility plan, which builds on previous work, including the city's 2010 age-friendly community plan.</i> | \$15,000 |

| Community | Application Description | Approved Grant |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| Kaslo | <i>This two-part project includes training and co-ordinating volunteers to provide one-on-one outreach and support to isolated seniors, as well as planning, organizing and facilitating a caregiver-support program.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Kelowna | <i>The city will engage in an age-friendly community assessment process to develop a community for all ages plan.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Keremeos | <i>Creation of an age-friendly outdoor fitness park to increase recreation and healthy living opportunities for seniors.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Mission | <i>The district will develop a strategy to support the health and well-being of Mission's aging population to help seniors age actively, safely, enjoy good health and stay connected to the community.</i> | \$18,500 |
| Nelson | <i>The city will conduct an age-friendly assessment of their community and develop an action plan. Partners include the Nelson CARES Society, the Nelson & District Seniors Coordinating Society, and the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute at Selkirk College.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Okanagan-Similkameen Regional District | <i>The regional district will work with BC Transit, businesses, and other partners to make bus stops and businesses in Okanagan Falls more accessible, and establish an incentive program to encourage local businesses to become more age-friendly.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Prince George | <i>The city will conduct an age-friendly accessibility assessment and develop an action plan to make Prince George more accessible and liveable for seniors.</i> | \$20,000 |

| Community | Application Description | Approved Grant |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Princeton | <i>The town will gather input from community workshops to inform the official community plan and age-friendly land use regulations completed by the town in 2013.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Revelstoke | <i>The city will work with businesses in the historic downtown core and the StopGap Foundation to install brightly coloured ramps to businesses that currently are inaccessible to those with mobility challenges, and will work with community fitness trainers to deliver exercise classes to those with balance and mobility challenges.</i> | \$12,335 |
| Salmo | <i>The village will develop information brochures and health and wellness programs, as well as improving sidewalk safety based on feedback from a survey and public roundtable forum.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Sayward | <i>The “Driving Miss Sayward / Live, Laugh, Love” project includes a bus program to reduce isolation among local seniors, a lunch program, wellness workshops, and social and recreational activities for seniors.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Sechelt | <i>The district will partner with Sunshine Coast seniors to conduct a survey and develop an age-friendly community plan, with the recommendations integrated into the district’s bylaws and policies.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Sicamous | <i>To increase accessibility compliance throughout the district and finalize the new seniors transportation services plan so that it is streamlined, cost-effective and sustainable.</i> | \$20,000 |

| Community | Application Description | Approved Grant |
|------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Silverton | <i>The village will develop a variety of age-friendly fall and winter educational and recreational activities for older adults. The topics will include end-of-life issues, accessing community resources, advance care planning, making healthy choices and staying at home versus assisted living.</i> | \$12,000 |
| Smithers | <i>The town will consult with the community to create an age-friendly action plan, focusing on accessibility and safety within outdoor spaces, trails, public buildings and recreation infrastructure.</i> | \$20,000 |
| Telkwa | <i>The village will develop additional plans for transportation and accessible trails, focusing on walking and bicycling infrastructure, icy winter conditions on paths and trails, stairways that are difficult to navigate and transportation options such as ride-share services.</i> | \$6,100 |
| Vancouver | <i>A dementia friendly city: Dementia Friends – Train the Trainer program to be delivered to city staff and non-profit organizations to increase participants’ awareness and improve their interactions with people with dementia.</i> | \$20,000 |

Appendix C: Community Gaming Grants in Support of Accessibility

2015/16 Community Gaming Grants

Community Gaming Grants are provided to a wide variety of non-profit organizations delivering programs and services to British Columbians. The program supports five sectors: Arts & Culture, Sport, Environment, Public Safety and Human & Social Services. In addition the program provides grants to Parent Advisory Councils.

Funding is distributed to close to 200 organizations in more than 40 communities. The nature of the programming ranges from disability sports to public health and community education.

For a full list of community gaming grants please visit: <https://www.gaming.gov.bc.ca/>

| Non-Profit Organization | Community Programming | Approved Funding |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| BC Blind Sports and Recreation Association | <i>Physical activity programming provided throughout BC for blind and visually impaired persons of all ages, to build skill levels and to meet other persons who are blind or visually impaired.</i> | \$250,000 |
| Special Olympics British Columbia Society | <i>Sports programming delivered in 57 communities across BC enabling athletes to experience joy and acceptance, cultivate friendships and self-confidence, and feel empowered to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.</i> | \$250,000 |
| BC Regional Chapter of Muscular Dystrophy Canada | <i>Services for persons with neuromuscular disorders through BC and the Yukon, including: education, support, assistance with acquiring mobility and respiratory equipment, and advocacy.</i> | \$200,000 |

| Non-Profit Organization | Community Programming | Approved Funding |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of BC | <i>Services for persons with ALS, throughout BC, including: outreach, mobility equipment loans, mobile clinics, support groups, free counselling, and transportation to medical appointments. Public awareness programming and workshops for caregivers are also delivered.</i> | \$166,500 |
| D.S.R.F. Down Syndrome Research Foundation | <i>Information services are provided to the public. In addition, group and one-on-one programs are provided to persons with Down Syndrome to teach and improve essential skills for independence.</i> | \$165,000 |
| BC Wheelchair Sports Association | <i>Wheelchair sports and physical activity opportunities for individuals with physical disabilities. Programming is provided for all ages and skill levels. Specialized wheelchairs are loaned to new participants to prevent financial barriers.</i> | \$250,000 |
| The Center for Epilepsy and Seizure Education BC | <i>For education and awareness programming for youth with seizure disorders as well as their families and peers, and counselling and support to patients, their families, and caregivers across B.C.</i> | \$320,000 |

Appendix D: Resort Municipality Initiative Accessibility Related Projects

Through the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI), government invests \$10.5 million annually in 14 resort communities for projects that help support local tourism infrastructure, amenities and programs. Recognizing the importance of accessible tourism, the following accessibility related projects have been supported through RMI funding:

City of Fernie

► Community Trail Paving Project

- Anticipated Completion: Fall 2016
- This project will consist of paving portions of Fernie's Loop Trails resulting in over 5 km of continuous paved trail. Improved trail offering, provide a barrier free multi-use trail suitable for all users including those with mobility challenges.

► Visitor Information Centre Project

- Anticipated Completion: Fall 2016
- The project consists of four components: landscaping improvements; reconfiguration of the interior spaces including enhancements to the Nature Centre; renovation of the washrooms to make the accessible; and signage improvements.

City of Golden

► Highway One Corridor Enhancement

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- As part of a larger project, the accessibility component is focused on a pedestrian connectivity corridor from the TransCanada Highway One (TCH1) to downtown. Approximately 800m of paving and switchback fencing will enable wheelchair access.

Village of Harrison Hot Springs

‣ Beach and Lagoon Improvements

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- Beach and Lagoon Improvements will involve several projects that improve the overall tourism infrastructure in the Village associated with the waterfront area. A key component will be enhancing the aesthetics and accessibility of the lagoon walkway as well as creating viewing points along the waterfront.

City of Kimberley

‣ Sullivan Mine Interpretive Train Project

- Completion: 2013/14
- As part of a larger project, work also included construction of a paved path from the Powerhouse Station to the Powerhouse entrance, for improved wheelchair accessibility.

Town of Osoyoos

The Town of Osoyoos conducted an Accessibility Audit of all public facilities in 2013. This study resulted in additional accessibility features being added to facilities developed by RMI funds and a Council direction to ensure that all future public facilities be fully accessible. As part of their planning for the remaining three years of the RMI program, one of the goals is to ensure accessibility to all visitor facilities.

‣ Marina Ramp

- Completion: 2014
- The marina ramp addition makes both sides of the marina accessible.

‣ Gyro Park development

- Completion: 2015
- The park was constructed in a manner that makes the entire area accessible.

‣ Trail Development/Connectivity Project

- Anticipated Completion: September 2017
- The Town of Osoyoos will be upgrading current trails that to improve walkability, accessibility and hiking experiences. Focus will be to upgrade paths with hard surfacing and lighting.

‣ **Waterfront Enhancement Project:**

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- As part of a larger project which includes a visitor activity centre, walkways, passive recreation areas, pier and supportive amenities, the development will include an accessibility ramp to the water to enable those with disabilities or mobility issues to enjoy the beach and lake.

City of Revelstoke

‣ **Downtown Washroom Facilities**

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- This project involves renovating the washrooms in the downtown core to provide better facilities for tourists and installing automatic doors to improve access for those with mobility challenges.

‣ **Williamson Lake Park Upgrade Project**

- Anticipated Completion: October 2017
- This project will include improvements to Williamson Lake Park, including accessible day use building, new viewing deck, enhanced fishing facilities, a wheelchair accessible path to the beach and landscaping.

‣ **Business and Visitor Information Centre**

- Completion: 2013/14
- This project was partially funded through RMI. It is a two-storey building and included the installation of an elevator in the building to ensure access for all visitors.

City of Rossland

‣ **Museum/Visitor Center renovation**

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- A large component of the renovation will be to make the washrooms accessible.

District of Tofino

‣ **MacKenzie Beach Accessible Beach Access**

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- This project will see the construction of a beach access ramp, parking area, and an accessible washroom and change room.

‣ Windy Hill Lookout

- Completion: 2014
- This project created a wheelchair accessible lookout on Tofino's Main Street with views of Tofino's working harbour and Clayoquot Sound.

District of Ucluelet

‣ Big Beach Visitors Access

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- Current access to the beach is very steep and limits accessibility. Part of this project will include an accessible trail to the Big Beach area.

‣ Beach Access Mats

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- The District of Ucluelet will install wheelchair/stroller accessible beach mats for persons with mobility issues to provide an opportunity for accessibility at two local beaches. The beaches will be Big Beach and Little Beach. There will also be a signage component to the project to identify accessibility.

‣ Terrace Beach Access Project

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- The current trail to Terrace beach is difficult to find and get down, accessibility is poor. This project will rework the trail to Terrace beach – focusing on accessibility and way-finding for tourists.

Village of Valemount

‣ Cranberry Marsh Trail

- Anticipated Completion: 2016
- As part of a larger project to complete the Cranberry Marsh Trail, the Village has upgraded parts of existing trails for wheelchair accessibility.

Resort Municipality of Whistler

‣ Conference Centre Improvements

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- Recent improvements have included the construction of an accessible lift to enable use of the stage area by people with disabilities. Other potential projects focused on accessibility improvements will be considered.

‣ Whistler Olympic Plaza Washroom Expansion

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- Construction of a new accessible washroom in Whistler Olympic Plaza. The existing washroom is a converted Britco trailer developed for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games and was considered a temporary installation. The trailer presents accessibility challenges and is undersized with respect to capacity as well as stall sizes.

‣ Village Square Mall Rejuvenation

- Anticipated Completion: Multiple projects to be completed throughout the next three years.
- Projects in 2015 included the construction of an accessible ramp from the Whistler Village Day lots to the Village entry at Village Gate Boulevard and accessibility improvements on the Cultural Connector. Future projects will include access gate improvements to facilitate pedestrian access and for those with disabilities, ramp improvements adjacent to the Whistler Conference Centre as well as to other areas.

‣ Valley Trail Mons Crossing

- Anticipated Completion: 2017
- The project includes construction of a paved valley trail railway underpass between the Cypress Place subdivision and Nesters Crossing inclusive of trail approaches and lights. The construction is a collaboration with a third party private developer to allow Valley Trail sections to be connected north and south of the railway. When complete, there will be a continuous accessible Valley Trail from Meadow Park to Whistler Village and the Upper Village.

