

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the City of Burnaby Accessibility Plan, provided as Attachment 1 to the report titled “Proposed Accessibility Plan” dated May 7, 2025, of the Access Advisory Committee meeting, be adopted.

REPORT

The Access Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on May 7, 2025, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council approval of the proposed Accessibility Plan.

On behalf of the Access Advisory
Committee,

Councillor M. Santiago
Chair

Councillor R. T. Lee
Vice Chair

TO: ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: **PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**
PURPOSE: To seek Council approval of the proposed Accessibility Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the City of Burnaby Accessibility Plan, provided as Attachment 1 to the report titled “Proposed Accessibility Plan” dated May 7, 2025, be adopted.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

This report aligns with the following Council-adopted policies:

- Draft Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan (2025);
- Corporate Strategic Plan (2022);
- Equity Policy (1994, updated 2020); and
- Social Sustainability Strategy (2011).

2.0 BACKGROUND

In June 2021, the Province passed the *Accessible British Columbia Act* which provides a framework for prescribed organizations, including local governments, to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. The City’s progress on the three core requirements for local governments is outlined below:

Table 1: *Accessible British Columbia Act* requirements for local governments

Requirements	Actions taken by the City
Establish an accessibility committee	In 1988 the City established a staff led Access Advisory Committee (AAC) that reported to the Social Planning Committee. In April 2022 Council formalized the AAC as a Committee of Council.
Establish a mechanism to receive feedback on the accessibility plan and barriers to individuals in or interacting with the organization	In August 2024 the City launched the Accessibility Feedback Form for community members to report accessibility barriers and provide general feedback on accessibility. In addition, feedback can be provided by email, over the phone and in person.
Establish an Accessibility Plan	On February 27, 2023, Council approved the introduction of the Accessibility Plan. A draft plan was brought forward to the Access Advisory Committee for their review on November 28, 2024. This report seeks approval of the Accessibility Plan.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

In June 2023, the City engaged a consultant to work with the public and City staff to develop the Accessibility Plan (Attachment 1). The proposed Accessibility Plan includes background information on the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, Burnaby's approach to developing the plan, the goals and actions, and our implementation approach. The Plan also includes an Implementation Matrix (Appendix A) and a summary of the community engagement findings (Appendix B). Details regarding the development and implementation of the plan are outlined in the following sections.

3.1 Preliminary Research and Engagement

The first step in development of the Accessibility Plan included community engagement, review of Provincial and Federal policy and legislation, and review of existing policy and actions related to accessibility undertaken by the City. Community engagement included a staff survey, focus groups with 25 community members and service providers who have lived and living experience with disability, and interviews with Accessibility Advisory Committee members. A summary of the community engagement findings is included in Appendix B of the Accessibility Plan (Attachment 1).

3.2 Developing the Accessibility Plan Goals and Actions

Based on the themes that emerged in the engagement process and the identified priority areas of focus of the *Accessible Canada Act* and the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, six key focus areas and 37 actions were established (see table 2).

Table 2: Accessibility Plan focus areas, goals and number of actions

#	Focus Area	Goal	Actions
1	Built Environment: Creating Accessible and Welcoming Physical Spaces	The City of Burnaby's buildings and public spaces are accessible to all community members and follow Universal Design Principles ¹ .	5
2	Information and Communication: Ensuring Clear and Accessible Information	Communication and information shared by the City of Burnaby is accessible to all, and multiple methods of providing feedback are available to people with disabilities.	5
3	Programs and Services: Providing Inclusive and Equitable Services	Programs, services, and events provided by the City of Burnaby are accessible to a full range of abilities, and staff have training and capacity to support accessibility needs and accommodations.	11
4	Procurement: Prioritizing Accessible Purchasing and Consulting Services	The City of Burnaby's procurement process emphasizes accessibility and inclusivity, so goods and services are accessible to everyone.	2

¹ Universal Design Principles: Equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, size and space for approach and use. See <https://www.rickhansen.com/news-stories/blog/universal-design-101>

5	Transportation: Facilitating Accessible and Efficient Transportation	People of all ages and abilities are able to travel throughout the City of Burnaby using their choice of transportation.	8
6	Employment: Cultivating an Inclusive and Supportive Work Environment	The City of Burnaby is an accessible and inclusive workplace that emphasizes attracting and retaining a diverse workforce of all abilities.	6

3.3. Feedback on the Draft Plan and Development of the Implementation Matrix

The draft Accessibility Plan prepared by the consultant was presented to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for their comment on November 28, 2024. The Committee provided feedback on the framework of the plan and wanted to see more detail to make the material actionable. Following the Committee's input, a workshop was held with the Staff Access Advisory Working Group in December 2024 to refine the actions. This session resulted in the preparation of a collectively filled out Implementation Matrix (Appendix B in Attachment 1). The Implementation Matrix provides details on how each action will be implemented by outlining the lead department(s) responsible for advancing the action, a description of the work that is underway or anticipated to complete the action, the status of action, and if funding is needed. Each lead department has been advised to include assigned actions in their departmental workplans and to seek funding or budget costs where necessary to advance the work.

3.4 Implementation

As the City already recognizes the importance of identifying, removing and preventing barriers, implementation of the actions in the Accessibility Plan are already in progress. As outlined in the Implementation Matrix, 21 actions are currently underway, meaning the initiative has been started but not completed, four actions are ongoing, meaning the initiative has been started and will continue to be advanced and improved in the long term, and 12 actions have not been started but will be added to future departmental workplans.

To ensure progress continues to be made on the Accessibility Plan, the Staff Access Advisory Working Group will review the Implementation Matrix and update the status of each action on a yearly basis. While this report seeks approval of the Accessibility Plan, it is recognized that the needs of the community are dynamic and as such plan will be revised in the future. The City will accept feedback on the Accessibility Plan from the Access Advisory Committee, the public and staff through the Accessibility Feedback Form on an ongoing basis and will formally update the plan at least once every three years as required by the *Accessible British Columbia Act*.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

After the Accessibility Plan is adopted, individuals who participated in community engagement, service providers, City of Burnaby staff, and the public will be informed of the adoption of the Accessibility Plan. Staff will concurrently promote the Accessibility Feedback Form as per action 3.9 of the Accessibility Plan, "to spread awareness about the tool and promote it through out the community". A Communications and

Engagement Plan has been developed by the Marketing and Communications Department to promote the Accessibility Plan and Feedback Form, including but not limited to the following methods:

- Inclusion in CityConnect (eNewsletter, video edition and print edition);
- Posters and digital screens in civic facilities; and
- Sharing information by email and the Interagency newsletter.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations related to City budgets at the time of adoption of the Accessibility Plan, however there would be costs associated with implementing many of the actions over the long term. During development of the Implementation Matrix, each Department assigned actions in the Accessibility Plan was asked to estimate associated costs for the required work. It was determined that 6 actions require funding with an estimated cost of \$1,795,000 over three years, and 6 actions require funding in an amount unknown at this time. A further 8 actions have been identified as potentially requiring funding, with amounts undetermined at this time. Departments that have been assigned actions will be advancing independent funding requests to Council for consideration at a future date on an as needed basis. The Staff Access Advisory Working Group will review the Implementation Matrix and consider applying for Social Planning and Research Council of BC grant funding of up to \$25,000 to help advance select actions with associated costs.

Respectfully submitted,

E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – City of Burnaby Accessibility Plan

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Claire Shepansky, Planner 1, and reviewed by Kyra Lubell, Planner 2, Frances Tang-Graham, Manager Communications and Community Engagement, Brad Domaas, Director Parks, Amy Choh, Director Engineering Transportation, James Lota, General Manager Lands and Facilities, Johannes Schumann, Director Community Planning, and Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development.